Chronicles
May 2009
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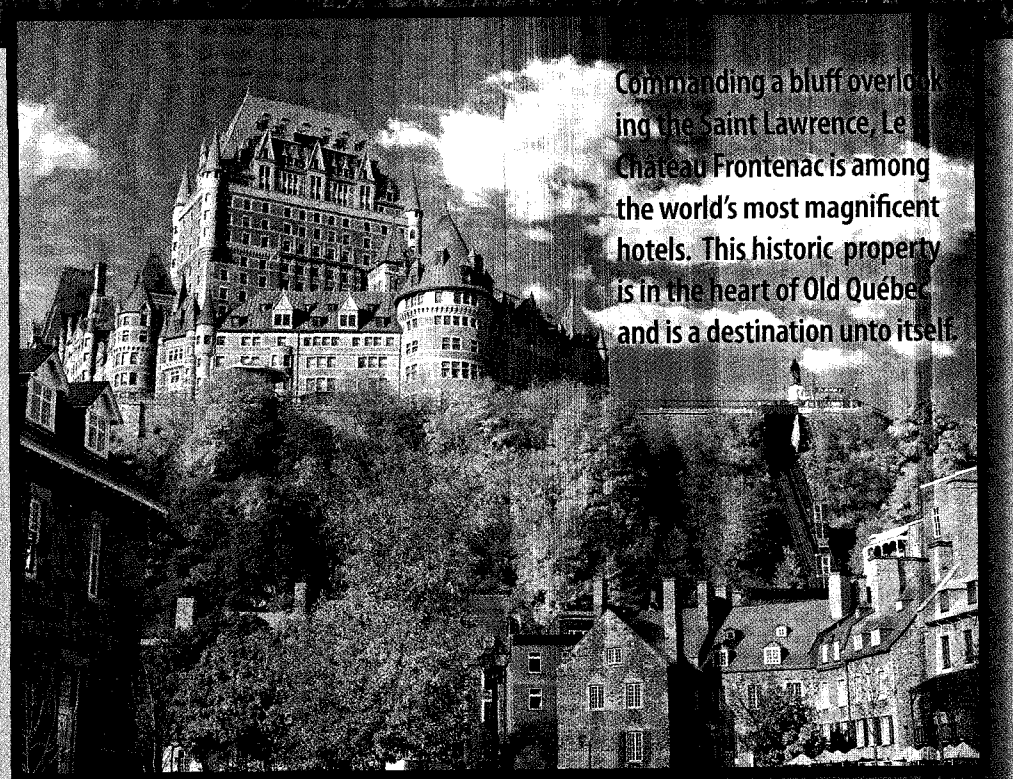

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PERSPECTIVE

Free Men of a Republic 10
by Thomas Fleming

ROUND TABLE

Can the Republic Be Restored? 14
"A Limited Presidency" by Clyde Wilson
"Adams' Federalism" by John Willson
"Just One More Thing" by William J. Quirk
"Is America a Republic?" by Donald Livingston
"Reviewing Judicial Review" by Stephen B. Presser
"The Classless Republic" by Chilton Williamson, Jr.
"The United States, In Congress Assembled" by Scott P. Richert
"A Share in the *Patria*" by Aaron D. Wolf

NEWS

The Martyrdom of Chas Freeman 23
by Justin Raimondo
Failing the Israel Lobby's litmus test.

REVIEWS

Infelix Culpa? 29
by George McCartney

Richard Green, ed.: *Graham Greene: A Life in Letters*
Norman Sherry: *The Life of Graham Greene*

Catharine Savage Brosman on Robert Gildea's *Children of the Revolution: The French, 1799-1914* ◈ **John M. Vella** on James Pereiro's *"Ethos" and the Oxford Movement: At the Heart of Tractarianism* ◈ 33

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter From Spain: Antifascists on the March 38
by Christie Davies

VITAL SIGNS

ARMS: **How Things Change Out From Under Us** 42
by Paul Craig Roberts

EDUCATION: **A Teacher Complains** 43
by Carey Harrison

COLUMNS

SINS OF OMISSION 13
by Roger D. McGrath

UNDER THE BLACK FLAG 28
by Taki Theodoracopulos

LETTER TO THE BISHOP 36
by Joe Ecclesia

THE ROCKFORD FILES 37
by Scott P. Richert

EUROPEAN DIARY 41
by Andrei Navrozov

IN THE DARK 46
Watchmen, Duplicity
by George McCartney

WHAT'S RIGHT WITH THE WORLD 48
by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

DEPARTMENTS

POLEMICS & EXCHANGES 4
AMERICAN PROSCENIUM 5
CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS 6
THE ALPHAVILLE DICTIONARY 50

POETRY
Rough Ocean and 12
The Color of the Ocean Last Summer 26
by Jonathan Chaves

ON THE COVER

Cover art by Scott P. Richert and Sandy Faulkner.
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A publication of The Rockford Institute.
Editorial and Advertising Offices:
928 North Main Street, Rockford, IL 61103.
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Chronicles: A Magazine of American Culture (ISSN 0887-5731) is published monthly for $44.99 (foreign subscriptions add $15 for surface delivery, $48 for Air Mail) per year by The Rockford Institute, 928 North Main Street, Rockford, IL 61103-7061. Preferred periodical postage paid at Rockford, IL and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Chronicles, P.O. Box 0567, Selmer, TN 38375.

The views expressed in *Chronicles* are the authors' alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Rockford Institute or of its directors. Unsolicited manuscripts cannot be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Chronicles

Vol. 33, No. 5 May 2009
Printed in the United States of America

On Men in Dark Rooms

When I first read a derogatory comment by Scott P. Richert about Dr. Alan Keyes in the May 2008 issue of *Chronicles* ("Tan, Rested, and Ready," *The Rockford Files*), I was moved to write—but am glad I waited. At the time I found it to be very uncharacteristic of the magazine, in general, and certainly of Mr. Richert to have made a statement with such certitude about which he obviously lacked the facts. It had been my privilege to have been in the company of Dr. Keyes when he described the details surrounding his encounter with Barack Obama during the campaign for the U.S. Senate seat in 2004. I knew the facts, and to read Mr. Richert's comment to the effect that Alan Keyes was sitting down in a darkened basement watching reruns of his debate with Obama, I knew that he not only didn't know the personal sacrifice Dr. Keyes made but, distressingly, had evidently made no effort to find out. Mr. Richert's remark was both unprofessional and uncharitable.

Now I don't have to defend Dr. Keyes, as he has laid out in his own words on his blog, *Loyal to Liberty*, his description of the encounter and the ominous future awaiting us. (I am enclosing "Obama: Civil War Disguised as Politics?" for Mr. Richert's reading and reflection.) Mr. Richert may ask himself, "Did I do my duty as a journalist?" "Should I have spoken to Dr. Keyes directly to hear him explain to me how he rejected the invitation of the GOP until faced with the knowledge of Obama's willingness to support infanticide?" Well, it's a little late now for ruminations, as the Great One, who may very well have usurped the office of the presidency, is under way with his plan to destroy our Republic.

"Sometimes we are not called to victory, but to witness for truth, as Jesus did, even unto death" (Alan Keyes).

—Michael D. Walsh
Chairman of America's Independent Party of Iowa, Windsor Heights, IA

Mr. Richert Replies:

I first met Alan Keyes in Washington, D.C., in the summer of 1989, when we both attended weekly meetings of a foreign-policy advocacy group on Capitol Hill. I found him an impressive speaker, quick with the facts.

When I returned to Michigan State that fall, one of my professors, a classmate of Keyes at Harvard, lent me a videotape of Keyes' 1988 debate with Paul Sarbanes in the race for U.S. senator from Maryland. Again, I was impressed. But during the Keyes-Mikulski Senate race in 1992, I began to see the side of Alan Keyes that was on display in his carpetbagging run in Illinois in 2004. With Mikulski outpolling Keyes two to one, the National Republican Senatorial Committee made the reasonable decision to deny further funds to Keyes. In response, he denounced his own party as racist—a tactic he used again in 2000 when he was excluded from a Republican presidential debate. He jumped into that race only after Pat Buchanan had won New Hampshire and Louisiana, and he spent most of his energy attacking Buchanan, the only solidly pro-life candidate who had a chance at winning the nomination.

The Rockford Files is a mixture of news and opinion, and the May 2008 column was about the role the Illinois Republican Party played in elevating Barack Obama to the national stage. The paragraph that Mr. Walsh dislikes was satire—like the opening paragraphs "documenting" President Obama's first hundred days in office.

Even so, writing the column in early March 2008, I joked that "[T]he Constitution Party is holding its convention in April in Kansas City, Missouri, home of the Negro League Baseball Museum. *This could still be his year.*"

After we went to press, Keyes announced his intention to seek the Constitution Party nomination, which he ultimately lost to Chuck Baldwin. Perhaps I know a bit more about Alan Keyes than Mr. Walsh thinks I do.

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by Ted Galen Carpenter

China Ups the Ante

Despite professions of friendship and cooperation in Washington and Beijing, U.S.-Chinese relations in the Obama era are off to a rocky start. The most prominent cause of tension was an incident in early March in the South China Sea. U.S.S. *Impeccable*, a "survey vessel" (spy ship) was conducting operations some 30 miles off the coast of China when several small Chinese vessels engaged in harassing behavior. Washington protested China's actions and sent a destroyer to protect *Impeccable*'s ongoing operations. Beijing responded by sending a modern patrol ship of its own to show the flag.

On one level, the episode is merely the latest manifestation of a long-standing disagreement between China and the United States (and most of China's neighbors) about the status of the South China Sea. Beijing claims the entire area as an "exclusive economic zone" and has taken steps to establish a presence in the Spratly and Paracel islands, a chain of uninhabited reefs and atolls that experts suspect sits atop major oil and natural-gas reserves. Washington, on the other hand, insists that the area is in international waters. As the world's leading maritime power, the United States opposes efforts by countries to lay claim to significant oceanic tracts. China's assertion of sovereignty over the South China Sea is especially worrisome because the area includes major sea lanes that are economic and strategic lifelines for Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and other U.S. allies.

But the latest brouhaha between Washington and Beijing is about far more than the status of the South China Sea. It reflects a changing power relationship. In one sense, the United States and China have been in a similar situation before. In April 2001, an ugly incident occurred in the air over the South China Sea when a U.S. spy plane collided with a Chinese air-force fighter and had to make an emergency landing on Hainan Island. A tense period followed in which hawks in both countries demanded that their governments adopt hardline policies. Cooler head eventually prevailed, however, and the crisis ended with a letter from Washington expressing "regret" for the episode (what American cynics described as a "non-apology apology").

There are, however, important differences between the two incidents. In 2001, the Bush administration soon retaliated with actions that caused Beijing more than a little discomfort. Most notably, Washington promptly announced approval of the largest arms sale to Taiwan in nearly a decade. U.S. political support for Taiwan's new pro-independence government headed by Chen Shui-bian also increased markedly. Chinese officials protested the direction of U.S. policy, but did little else.

This time, tangible manifestations of displeasure have come from Beijing as much as from Washington. True, a congressional resolution, passed shortly after the *Impeccable* confrontation, expressing support for the Dalai Lama and the "plight of the Tibetan people" hardly seemed conciliatory. Even less so was the Pentagon's approval (just days after China dispatched her patrol vessel) of a contract for Lockheed Corporation to boost the capabilities of Taiwan's fleet of antisubmarine P-3 aircraft.

But China's primary response, although more subtle, was at least as confrontational. It came in the form of a comment by Premier Wen Jiabao expressing "concern" about the "safety" of China's holdings of U.S. government debt. Most observers in the United States missed the principal import of Wen's statement, concluding that he was warning against reckless U.S. government spending that could weaken the dollar and damage the value of China's financial holdings. That may have been one purpose, but Wen also was sending a reminder that Washington is heavily dependent on China to fund the soaring federal budget deficit, which is expected to exceed two trillion dollars this year. There was an implication that Beijing's willingness to continue financing America's debt addiction might be jeopardized if U.S.-China relations soured. And, clearly, they could sour over matters such as Taiwan or incidents in the South China Sea as easily as they could over trade or other economic issues.

In 2001, America was at or near the peak of her post-Cold War hegemonic status, with no credible peer competitor even on the horizon. China was still in the early phases of a military modernization, and although she had made breathtaking economic progress over the previous two decades, she was far from being a serious competitor to the United States in any respect. Equally important, America was in fairly solid financial shape. The federal government was enjoying successive years of budget surpluses—something that had not occurred for decades. September 11 was merely a date on the calendar, and the Iraq war was nothing more than a hopeful gleam in the eyes of a tiny number of neoconservative zealots.

Today, the Iraq War and profligate domestic spending have transformed America into a debt addict heavily dependent on China as her principal foreign banker. Conversely, Beijing's bargaining position has improved immeasurably since 2001, especially given her accumulation of more than two trillion dollars in foreign exchange reserves.

We are seeing the early signs of China's attempt to use that increased leverage to weaken Washington's geopolitical position in East Asia. The South China Sea is the first episode. It is not likely to be the last. ◁©

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A TIME TO SUE

After years of complaining about liability lawsuits against doctors and businessmen that award millions to plaintiffs and enrich unscrupulous lawyers, conservatives may finally have a few lawsuits they can support. Across the country, victims of illegal-alien crime are filing suit against businessmen who hire them and cities that protect them. In other words, leftists who have used the law, courts, and police to shaft Americans on behalf of illegals may soon get the shaft themselves.

Two of the latest involve traffic fatalities. In McMinnville, Tennessee, Steve and Bobbie Sweet have filed a $250 million lawsuit against Porter Roofing, which employed the illegal alien suspected of killing their daughter and friend in a hit-and-run wreck in September. The Sweets allege Porter knew that Herlin "Gato" Alvarez was an illegal alien when they permitted him to drive its trucks without a valid driver's license. They also allege the roofing contractor created a shell company to skirt immigration law to hire illegals. Alvarez is still at large.

Meanwhile, two women have filed a wrongful-injury claim against Denver, Colorado, in the case of an illegal alien, Francis Hernandez, who had been arrested 16 times. In September, in the nearby city of Aurora, police allege, Hernandez plowed his Chevy Suburban at 78 mph into a Mazda pickup, killing its two occupants and sending the vehicle into a Baskin-Robbins. The hurtling Mazda killed a two-year-old boy and injured the plaintiffs. They may also sue the city of Denver because, they argue, it is a sanctuary city that protects illegals, in violation of state law. "Despite these numerous arrests and the readily ascertainable illegal-immigrant status of Mr. Hernandez, at no time were proper procedures relating to the reporting, detention and handling of illegal immigrants followed by the law-enforcement agencies of the city of Denver," their claim against the city says. Other localities, including Aurora, may also be targets.

A third case involves San Francisco. The Bologna family has filed a claim against and will likely sue the city because its sanctuary policy led directly to the murder of the family's father and two brothers. Edwin Ramos, a convicted felon and MS-13 gang member who was never deported, is charged with the crime. The Bolognas got wise to the city's illegal-alien shenanigans when the *San Francisco Chronicle* divulged Ramos's juvenile-crime records, which included the attempted robbery of a pregnant woman. "[O]fficials with the Juvenile Probation Department, relying on their interpretation of San Francisco's sanctuary city ordinance, had not referred Ramos to federal immigration authorities for possible deportation," the *Chronicle* reported. The ordinance bars city officials from cooperating with federal crackdowns on illegal immigrants."

Can the plaintiffs win? Michael Hethmon, general counsel of the Immigration Reform Law Institute, which has filed suits to challenge all sorts of policies that benefit illegals, told the *Washington Times* that these lawsuits usually fail, but as illegals keep murdering Americans and killing them in traffic wrecks, particularly by drunk driving, a plaintiff will eventually prevail. "We're on the cutting edge of the law, but it's simply a matter of one case working its way through the court system, and as soon as one is successful, you'll see the tort bar all over this."

As well it should be. Illegal aliens are routinely involved in drunk-driving fatalities and are conducting a crime wave against American citizens that would be considered an act of war in saner times.

Conservatives generally oppose liability lawsuits, particularly the patently fraudulent claims of negligence. No one thinks a business should pay huge damage claims if its products are wrongly used. Likewise, a city's officials cannot predict when an illegal alien will commit murder or drunken vehicular homicide if they don't know he's in town. But these lawsuits make a good point. As with a business that knowingly sells a faulty product to an unsuspecting customer, officials who refuse to cooperate with federal immigration authorities know, in the legalese of the Ramos case, "it was reasonably foreseeable" that a violent felon released onto the streets would commit more crimes. That's called negligence. Indeed, when it involves a convicted felon, it ought to be considered *criminal* negligence, and the officials should be prosecuted in criminal court, and not merely subject to civil damages for which taxpayers will pick up the tab.

Where this leaves the federal government, which has permitted illegal-alien anarchy to reign in big-city streets and refused to close the border, is open to question. Lawsuits against Uncle Sam rarely succeed.

No matter. These lawsuits will help average Americans bring some semblance of sanity back to their streets. And they may do even more if a plaintiff collects millions for wrongful death from a city such as San Francisco. For years, illegal aliens and their leftist allies have used lawsuits and the courts as weapons to steal property from and loot the bank accounts of Americans.

Now, those weapons have been turned around.

—R. Cort Kirkwood

ARNOLD'S PYRITE STATE

The most obscene political speech I ever heard was delivered by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger in 2007 for the Orange County Republican Party's annual Flag Day dinner. He began with his stock boy-immigrant-from-Austria spiel, a version of which you might have heard him give at the 2004 GOP National Convention. Then he brought up the red-white-and-blue American-flag underwear he wore as an Austrian teen. As this is a fam-

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ily magazine, I'll spare the readers his lurid details.

Yet even as the Orange County audience laughed and wrote checks, Arnold, their fellow Republican, was teaming with state Democrats—and a few sellout GOP legislators—to pass record spending increases. After all, in 2007 business was booming. Recessions had been abolished. The business cycle had been repealed. The median price for an Orange County home was $650,000—and rising.

What economists called the "wealth effect"—home "owners" remortgaging their houses and blowing part of the windfall on hot tubs and BMWs—was flooding Orange County, and all California, with untold wealth.

In addition to this fiscal lunacy, there were other signs that Arnold was not so much an Austrian who, as he said in his stock speech, fled Austrian socialism for American capitalism, but rather someone bent on turning California into a simulacrum of the socialist Austria of his youth.

Arnold became obsessed with "global warming." In 2006 he signed into law Assembly Bill 32, which enacted the most draconian restrictions on carbon emissions in the country. Businesses took note and stopped expansions.

That same year he boasted in his State of the State Address that he was the leader of a California "nation state" which would show America, and the world, how perpetually to expand a green, high-tech economy. Unable to run for president of the United States because of his foreign birth, he would make California a *de facto* country. A *Time* story paired Arnold with New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg as the "postpartisan" twins.

Among the nearly 1,000 bills signed every year—almost all tyrannical—he pushed and signed into law a bill banning driving while using a cell phone, unless you clip one of those cockroaches to your ear. He first opposed "legalizing" same-sex "marriage," then backed it.

In October 2007, he signed into law Senate Bill 385, which, in the summary issued by the governor's office, would "adopt emergency measures and new policies to ensure that all mortgage lenders and brokers are subject to federal guidelines on non-traditional mortgages." We now know that "non-traditional mortgages" are those that went to folks, often poor immigrants, who couldn't afford them.

During his first five years in office (2003-08), Arnold increased state spending 40 percent, far outstripping state taxpayers' ability to pay for his profligacy, even in boom times. He has "balanced" state budgets by borrowing and gimmicks—shifting funds around and projecting federal aid that never comes. Even President Obama's borrowed "stimulus" money fell two billion dollars short of state expectations.

In 2008, the U.S. economy finally buckled under the weight of years of fiscal mismanagement at all levels of government, as well as misfeasance in private industry. The crash struck nowhere harder than in California. Unemployment is now over ten percent, and rising.

California's budget deficit grew to an incredible $42 billion. By contrast, Michigan, with about 30 percent of California's population, suffered a deficit of only four billion, despite being in a recession for most of the decade.

In 2003, Arnold was elected chiefly because he promised to terminate an illegal tax on cars that had been imposed, by executive fiat, by Gov. Gray Davis. When Davis was recalled, the new governor made good on that promise, and pledged to stop all tax increases.

But in 2009, Arnold's antitax pledges deflated like his body when he quit taking steroids. He pushed through the Democratic-run legislature a raft of tax increases, including a new car tax. California income and sales taxes, already the highest in America, now are even higher. Of course, all these taxes are supposed to be "temporary," lasting only two years. And a special May 19 statewide vote will be held to approve another $16 billion in tax increases.

Even that won't be enough. On March 14, the state's nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office determined that California is still at least six billion dollars in the red. State legislators began talking of even more tax increases.

In response, another tax revolt is baking in the warm California sun. Like Proposition 13 in 1978, it could spark a national tax revolt.

Schwarzenegger will leave office in January 2011 a complete disgrace, having never really balanced a budget and leaving the state effectively bankrupt. He turned the Golden State into the Pyrite State.

—*John C. Seiler, Jr.*

THE BISHOP TAKES A STAND!

In recent years America has seemed to lack the sort of bold churchman who is willing to put his penny-loafered foot down and say enough is enough. But according to recent press reports, the shoe has dropped. Even in these degraded times, there is a limit—a line you just can't cross.

What is that line?

It's the border between Jerusalem and Mecca. A March 15 headline in *USA Today* breathlessly introduces this tale of clerical intolerance: "Bishop orders Episcopal priest to renounce Islamic faith."

The priest in question is The Rev. Ann Holmes Redding, the dreadlocked daughter of Louis L. Redding, who helped to argue on behalf of *Brown* against the *Board of Education* before the Supreme Court. In June 2007, Miss Redding, then-director of "faith formation" at St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral, Seattle, announced that she had converted to Islam.

"It's still a mystery as to why, on March 25, 2006, which happens to be my ordination date and the annunciation, I felt called to say the Shahadah with the intention of becoming a Muslim," she admitted.

But don't worry—she insists she's still a Christian. "I am both Muslim and Christian, just like I'm both an American of African descent and a woman. I'm 100 percent both."

Now, I am both white and male, "100 percent," but I still must admit that I cannot understand how A can also be non-A. Miss Redding? "I have re-

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viewed the vows of the baptismal covenant and the vows I took as a priest many times since I entered Islam," she said in an online chat with readers of the *Seattle Times*. "I am not violating those vows by my own estimation." On the contrary, we should *learn* from her. After all, "The two religions illuminate each other."

Now, before you pull out your Athanasian Creed and start firing, realize that the *Seattle Times* has already polled some noteworthy theologians from both religions in question, and their assessment of Miss Redding is "mixed." What matters here is that, from the beginning, this priest of more than two decades has stated her willingness to accept the judgment of her episcopal superior.

Miss Redding's bishop (who, through a strange twist of jurisdictional fate, is the bishop of Rhode Island), suspended her priestliness for one year, during which time she was supposed to think things over. Miss Redding then spent 2007-08 teaching at Seattle University, a school run by Jesuits. ("A Jesuit education," notes the school's helpful promotional material, "challenges students to think clearly, think for themselves, and test commonly accepted knowledge.")

Miss Redding thought for herself, and concluded that she was still right. Thus, in October 2008, Bishop Wolf (no relation) lowered the boom—or the pre-boom. As reported by the Diocese of Rhode Island, the "Standing Committee has determined that Dr. Redding abandoned the Communion of the Episcopal Church by formal admission into a religious body not in communion with the Episcopal Church. The bishop has affirmed that determination." If Redding doesn't un-join the *Dar al-Islam* by the end of March, the bishop will have no choice but to depose her from the priesthood.

Wait a minute. What is Redding's sin again—"formal admission into a religious body not in communion with the Episcopal Church"? What about denying the Trinity? The divinity of Jesus Christ? Well, Bishop Wolf sees where we're going with this: "The [Episcopal] church wants to be diverse and inclusive, but we're decidedly Christian. We're Christ-followers."

So what, in Bishop Wolf's estimation, is a "Christ-follower"? Does the bishop mean it the way megachurch pastor Bill Hybels (who popularized the term) means it? Apart from its usage, *Christ-follower* seems like a hole big enough to ride a magic carpet through. Doesn't Miss Redding consider herself a "Christ-follower"?

Yes, she does, and that has made things difficult for Bishop Wolf. Miss Redding "is a very bright person, and I cannot say enough about the depth of her integrity. Hers is not a superficial decision, and this is why I been very deliberate and have taken over a year to talk things through. We've been in dialogue since June, 2007."

These are busy times for the bishop of Rhode Island; when Geralyn Wolf began her dialogue with Miss Redding, she was a newlywed. And that right there is a story all by itself. When her future husband, financier Thomas Charles Bair, Jr., asked her out for some barbecue after the service one magical Sunday, "I thought he wanted to talk about the church, but he really wanted to get to know me," she told the *Providence Journal*. For Bair, it was love at first homily: "When I heard the bishop addressing the congregation that morning, I just found her to be very loving and very interesting to listen to, so I was attracted."

Now, why would Bishop Wolf think that this parishioner would want to talk about church business and not *amour*? Because she was appearing at St. John's in Newport, Rhode Island, of which she is ecclesial shepherdess, in order to smooth relations with the disgruntled congregation. And why were these folks disgruntled? Because the Episcopal Church had ordained the homosexual homewrecker V. Eugene Robinson as bishop of New Hampshire; St. John's had even taken "Episcopal" off the sign and replaced it with "Anglican," in protest.

Bishop Wolf, by the way, was a vocal supporter of the ordination of the "openly gay" Bishop Robinson. So her understanding of "Christ-follower," then, must mean a disciple of the imaginary Jesus who never, no never, discriminates—at least not against female and homosexual clergy. Perhaps that sheds some light on the meaning of her gentle ultimatum to Miss Redding: "I believe that Islam and Christianity have enough differences to make it impossible to adhere to them both with integrity."

Sodomy is, to put it mildly, frowned upon by mainstream Islam—not to mention female imammery. Does this mean that Miss Redding, of all people, is the *conservative* in this sordid tale? Not likely. In reaction to Bishop Wolf's tender scolding, the scion of the civil-rights movement prophesied, "If we want to survive as a Church, and be faithful witnesses of Christ, I believe all the people of the world must be in communion."

Not so fast, Miss Redding! There are some lines you can't cross.

—Aaron D. Wolf

OBITER DICTA

Mark your calendar now for the 20th Annual Meeting of the **John Randolph Club**, November 13-14, 2009, San Antonio, Texas. The weekend will be preceded by a two-day cultural program of lectures and sightseeing celebrating Texas history. Watch future issues of *Chronicles* or visit *www.chroniclesmagazine.org* for more information.

Our poet this month is **Jonathan Chaves**, professor of Chinese at The George Washington University, Washington, D.C. His books of translations of Chinese poetry, including Chinese-language poetry by Japanese authors, have won the Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission Prize for the Translation of Japanese Literature and been nominated for the National Book Award. His original poems have appeared in literary magazines such as *Ironwood* and *The Greenfield Review*.

Our cover photo is provided by Executive Editor **Scott P. Richert**. The cover is designed by **Sandy Faulkner**.

Our interior art is provided by **Melanie Anderson**. Mrs. Anderson, our designer, received her B.F.A. from Northern Illinois University.

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The Meaning and Legacy of "Reconstruction"

July 19-24, 2009

Up to the1960s, historians tended to view "Reconstruction" (1865-1877) as a dark and tragic era. A devastated region, having undergone scorched-earth war, was humiliated, punished, and plundered under twelve years of military rule and by a Congress that showed little respect for Constitutional restraints. After the 1960s, however, a new historiography appeared, inspired by Marxist-style analysis. "Reconstruction" was now seen as the high point in America's revolutionary goal of building an egalitarian society. But it failed thanks to Northern lack of will and Southern violence. Reconstruction was not a tragic era but an egalitarian revolution that did not go far enough.

Although it is the mainline view today, the new historiography has not refuted the older one. It has simply displaced it. The goal of the summer school is to recover what is true in the older historiography as well as to introduce new topics for research and writing.

PLACE

The conference site is in a beautiful palmetto grove on the beach at Seabrook Island near Charleston where we will spend a day and have supper.

COST AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Tuition, room, and three meals per day (suppers are extraordinary) for five days is $900 for a single; for two in a room, $1,444; for three, $2,032

Scholarships are available to qualified college and graduate students who are encouraged to apply. The studious and thoughtful of all ages are also welcome.

St. Christopher Conference Center
2810 Seabrook Island, Johns Island, South Carolina • (843) 768-0429

FACULTY AND TOPICS

Clyde Wilson—Reconstruction: An Overview • Reconstruction as a Problem in Statesmanship • The History of Reconstruction and Revolutionary Mythology

John Devanny—The Economic Cost of Reconstruction • The Human Cost of Reconstruction

Carey Roberts—The Unwelcome Result: Determining the Number of Black Deaths Resulting From War and Reconstruction

Eric Richardson—What Was the Construction in "Reconstruction"? • The Victor's Definition of Race: How Radical Reconstruction Divided Southern Society Along the Color Line

Troy Kickler—Better than Slavery?: Contraband Camps and Abuses at the Hands of Liberators • Definitions of a Good American: The Northern Influence on the First Free Generation of African Americans • More Baptist Than Black: A History of Black Baptists in Reconstruction

David Aiken—William Gilmore Simms on Reconstruction

Donald Livingston—Constitutional Reconstruction: The Fourteenth Amendment • Constitutional Reconstruction: *Texas* v. *White*

Jack Trotter—The Lost Cause Movement and the War Against Leviathan

Jonathan White—Reconstruction's Legacy in U.S. Occupation Policy After World War I and II

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by Thomas Fleming

Free Men of a Republic

"The Constitution gives every American the inalienable right to make a damn fool of himself." I first heard this wise insight into the American way of life from Sam Ervin, who was, as I have since learned, quoting John Ciardi. I should not be surprised: Poets always get to the heart of the matter a lot quicker and cleaner than politicians do.

What Ciardi and Senator Sam meant by this, I believe, was that our original Constitution and Bill of Rights designed a very limited government that restricted the ability of the federal government to compel virtue. If an employer preferred to hire a less qualified white male rather than a qualified black female, it was his loss. But lurking behind this aphorism is an unspoken assumption that our Constitution embodies the American spirit summed up in the common phrase, "Mind your own business."

We have a written Constitution, to be sure, but behind that Constitution is a set of assumptions that everyone once took for granted, such as the belief that no professing atheist can be elected president. The broadest set of these assumptions, one whose significance is still debated, was the acceptance of English common law in cases where no statute obviously applied.

It is often said that we are the first people to have a written Constitution. In the literal sense, this cannot be true. If we set aside such oddities as the constitution of ancient Thurii, drawn up by the philosopher Protagoras, patriotic Americans must still concede that every civilized people has had legal codes that were revised and amended until they covered much of what we think a constitution is supposed to do. While it is true that neither 19th century Britain nor (A.D.) second century Rome possessed a single document titled "The Constitution," each had a series of laws, decrees, and legal decisions that collectively described how their political and legal systems were supposed to function.

When we read that Aristotle studied the "constitutions" of Athens and Carthage, we must not imagine that he was restricted to quoting documents. An intelligent Athenian knew how the Assembly and Council were constituted, but he may not have read the inscriptions that prescribed the procedures. In any event, there was no one document. Such a plan was usually restricted to the imagination of utopian philosophers like Plato or Thomas More, who legislated for demigods and angels rather than for men.

Our word *constitution* is simply the English form of the Latin *constitutio*, which can refer either to the settled and established order (from *constituere*, "to set up or establish") or to a specific ordinance. Both senses may have been on the minds of Americans in the 1780's, but it is the former, used to translate a similarly constructed Greek word (*katastasis*), that is fundamental. For the Roman or the Greek or the Englishman, the constitution was not a single document or a set of laws but the established way things were done. Cicero expressed reverence for the excellence of the constitutional system passed down from early times, not because he thought the Twelve Tables, though set in stone, could not be amended and augmented to fit changing circumstances, but because the basic outlines of the Roman order—the Senate, the magistrates, the fundamental laws—were the most stable and just order the world had ever known.

The Americans who put a constitution on paper were in some ways more revolutionary than the rebels who broke with the British Empire. Secessions are a common historical phenomenon, while constitutions put together from scratch are quite rare. As time went on, the document began to take on a sacred character, something like the tablets of the Ten Commandments. But it is not at all clear that Americans were committed from the outset to preserving either the letter or the spirit of the Constitution. Consider only the case of our country's Founding Father.

George Washington had been a loyal British subject who fought for the Empire and the English Constitution in the 1750's before fighting against it in the 1770's. He agreed to America's first written constitution, The Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union, in 1781 and only six years later presided over a committee that was empowered to revise the Articles but which, without any real warrant, decided to replace them with a new Constitution. That Constitution was a masterful representation of the sectional, economic, and private interests of its Framers, who were not an assembly of Solons or demigods but were more like a high-level meeting of lobbyists and ward heelers, who saw to it that their constituents were provided for. That is why it worked for a time.

From the beginning, the new Constitution was undermined, as Jefferson noted, by John Marshall and the federal judiciary, and in later years it came to be so often amended against itself—redefining who citizens are, imposing the very taxation that had been forbidden, turning the Bill of Rights against the states and people it was supposed to

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protect—that it would be childish to speak of defending or restoring a document whose rules for over a hundred years have been more often honored in the breach than in the observance. We have shown even less reverence to our state constitutions, most of which have been rewritten completely more than once.

Constitutions written in imitation of the Constitution of 1787 sometimes express an implied critique of what were perceived as defects or deficiencies. Some Southern constitutions stipulated that only whites could be citizens, while the Constitution of Liberia (1847), written by former American slaves, declared that "all men are born equally free and independent" and thundered an anathema against slavery: "There shall be no slavery within this Republic. Nor shall any citizen of this Republic, or any person resident therein, deal in slaves, either within or without this Republic, directly or indirectly." If a constitution could transform human nature, the prohibition on slavery might have worked. But when the former slaves who constituted the Liberian political elite were challenged by the natives they presumed to rule, the interlopers decided to kill two birds with one stone by selling the truculent natives to the Spanish. As late as the 1930's Liberia was notorious for a system of forced labor that very strongly resembled slavery, and even today critics of the Liberian regime do not hesitate to condemn it for being a partner in the exploitation of child labor.

Constitutions tell us what the men who framed them and the men who ratified them wanted, but, as time goes by, they have less and less bearing on how people live and governments govern. If a constitution could create a free republic, Liberia would have become something better than a mulatto despotism that exploited and enslaved black Africans. It is a free people, as Clyde Wilson has reminded us, that creates a republican constitution and never the other way around.

In 1836, when Texans sat down to write a constitution for their republic, they were in no mood to waste time. The siege of the Alamo was grinding away to its bloody conclusion, and Houston's gloriously improbable victory at San Jacinto was only a month and a half away. An educated Spaniard stood up and invoked an "eminent Roman statesman," but he was cut off by Tom Rusk, with the admonition that the convention should "give less thought to dead Romans and more attention to live Mexicans." Inevitably, the Texas Constitution was based very heavily on the U.S. Constitution and on the state constitutions of Southern states, all of which provided for a separation of powers and explicitly limited the overall power of the government.

Like the various state constitutions adopted after 1787 and like the Confederate Constitution passed in 1861, the Texas Constitution tells us a great deal about what Americans of succeeding generations meant when they spoke of republican government. The original Tennessee Constitution, for example, makes it clear that, while no religious test could be imposed on office-holders, "No person who denies the being of god, or a future state of rewards and punishments, shall hold any office in the civil department of this State." By implication, this leaves out Universalists and most Jews, though Muslims, if there were any in Tennessee, would have still been eligible.

Both the Texas Constitution and the Declaration of Independence that preceded it (March 2) give us an insight into the republican mind-set of Americans in Texas. They made the status of Common Law explicit, and they were very clear that the right to bear arms is both a personal and a collective right: "Every citizen shall have the right to bear arms in defence of himself and the Republic." It also granted Texans "the inalienable right to alter their government in such manner as they may deem proper." Where every man went armed, this would not have been a difficult right to assert, as Texans did in 1861.

The most original aspect of the Texas Constitution is the large section devoted to the acquisition and possession of property. The validity of land claims was spelled out in detail, and a land office set up, but its operations were postponed until the men who fought for independence were given "a fair and equal chance with those remaining at home to select and locate their lands."

Two years after the drafting of the Texas Constitution, Texas passed the first homestead act, enabling veterans of the war to acquire huge slices of territory. This land was sacred and could not be alienated for delinquent taxes. As T.R. Fehrenbach observes in his magnificent history of Texas, *Lone Star*, "Land . . . was assuming sacred proportions at law. Against the rights of private property, in Texas, even the public rights of eminent domain often were in doubt." Even today, Texans lead the fight against eminent domain. Although a Texas law drafted before the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in the *Kelo* case left a loophole for slum clearance, a major fight is shaping up over a possible amendment to the Texas Constitution.

In Texas there may be hope for relief from the threat of eminent domain and from unfair property taxes, because some Texans, including immigrants from other sections, apparently are still Texans. Constitutions do not make a people free any more than clothes make the man. Men, in fact, make clothes, and a free people makes a constitution that expresses its character. Republicans tried to destroy Texas during Reconstruction: They proposed breaking up the state; they forbade ex-Confederates to hold office or sit on juries; they tried to tax property out of existence and kept the money for themselves.

Texans responded to this tyranny with their usual exuberance. Decent ex-Unionists and Republicans joined forces with their former Confederate enemies to plan and execute a massive voter uprising that even the corrupt Grant administration could not ignore, and all over Texas ex-soldiers took the law, which had been usurped by carpetbaggers and scalawags, into their own hands by forming Vigilance committees, by lynching murderers, and by assuming personal responsibility for defending their honor and their families from the oppressor. This was the ugly

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period of the great Texas blood feuds, the decade that witnessed the rise to eminence of cold-blooded gunmen like John Wesley Hardin and Clay Allison. It was an evil time in which no sane man would want to live, but, to be fair to the shootists, they were living up to the code they had learned from their parents, who had inherited it from distant ancestors. As Wes Hardin, son of a Methodist (!) minister, explained: "Our parents had taught us from our infancy to be honest, truthful, and brave, and we were taught that no brave boy would let another call him a liar with impunity." Forty-some killings later, Hardin would himself be murdered by a sheriff's deputy of dubious reputation.

Hardin and Allison were probably not "natural-born killers." Their casual attitude toward homicide was born of the troubled and violent conditions they experienced in growing up. In an earlier generation or in a more settled place, they might have ridden with Francis Marion or Jeb Stuart. The footloose Americans who left Virginia for Tennessee and abandoned homes in Tennessee for a perilous existence in Texas were not the products of a stable civilization. If their people had not been wanderers, they might have stayed home in the nooks and crannies of the British Isles from which they had swarmed to the New World.

An outstanding example of these men was Capt. Creed Taylor. Born in Texas to Alabama parents, Taylor fought for Texas independence and joined the Texas Rangers. He lived to see his country conquered, and his sons and several nephews murdered by supporters of the Reconstruction government. Before his death, Creed Taylor dictated a memoir whose title could serve as an epitaph for the bold Americans who conquered the West, *Tall Men With Long Rifles*. We should never forget that it is of such men—and not of even the best written constitution—that a republic is made. ◈

Rough Ocean

by Jonathan Chaves

My soul could be this seagull,
fighting the wind,
or this boat with its red anchor
like a heart,
in harbor today because it is too windy
for fishing.

When these winds die down
the boat will move out
into the open sea
and the fishermen, cigarettes dangling
from their mouths,
will cast their nets into the ocean—
and with them, thoughts
of sad eyes
behind half-opened doors at home.
Perhaps their souls
are the fish they will catch.

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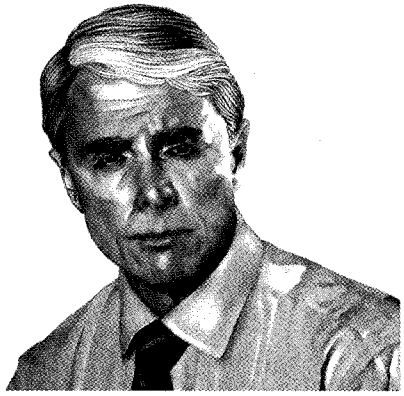
by Roger D. McGrath

Mr. Outside: Glenn Davis



As the 20th century drew to a close lists of the century's greatest figures in various fields of endeavor appeared regularly in newspapers and magazines. Revealing that memories were short, the lists tended to be dominated by figures of recent vintage, especially in the sports world. This is probably a consequence of the ephemeral nature of the contributions of athletes, unlike those of scientists or physicians or writers. I should think, though, that athletes should be judged by how they performed against their competition. By that standard, no running back in the history of college football outshines Glenn Davis of West Point fame. Yet, Glenn Davis was left off a few of the top-ten lists I saw for running backs.

When I was young, the two running backs most talked about in our family were Glenn Davis and Ernie Nevers, the latter because he played football with the McGrath boys at Central High in Superior, Wisconsin, and went on to become all-everything at Stanford, and the former because my big brother was a fan of Army football. My brother fed me Davis stories, statistics, and photos since I was four or five years old. Glenn Davis was the halfback I wanted to be. A decade earlier he was the halfback every aspiring football player wanted to be.

Davis was a Southern California boy who excelled in every sport his high school—Bonita in La Verne—offered. On the track the only thing other sprinters saw of him were his heels. In football he made cuts and accelerated like a cheetah. At the conclusion of his senior season in football during the fall of 1942, the still-16-year-old Davis was named CIF (California Interscholastic Federation) Player of the Year. Winter saw him star on the basketball team. During the spring of 1943 he made All-CIF in baseball and was named Southern California's top track and field athlete.

When Davis arrived at West Point during the late summer of 1943, legendary football coach Red Blaik was certain the Southern California golden boy must have a big head. In practice Blaik immediately had Davis carry the ball against West Point's first string—just to teach the kid a lesson. Davis bounced, squirmed, changed direction, and exploded for 80 yards and a touchdown. Blaik could now think of nothing to do but chew out Davis for imagined faults with the run. With the team watching, Blaik told Davis that he had missed the hole, cut the wrong way off blocks, changed direction at the wrong time, and extended a limp limb instead of a rigid stiff-arm at would-be tacklers. "What do you have to say for yourself, Davis?" a yelling Blaik concluded. Davis looked at the ground and pawed the turf. "Well, coach," the 17-year-old plebe finally answered, "how was it for distance?"

For Army that first season Davis led the team to a 7-2-1 record and gained 1,028 yards on 144 carries, a 7.1 yard average, and scored 8 touchdowns. The legend was for real. The next season saw the arrival of fullback Felix "Doc" Blanchard, who would team with Davis to give Army the greatest backfield duo in the history of college football. At 6'1" and 210 lbs.—about three inches taller and 35 lbs. heavier than Davis—Blanchard was the bruiser who could run through interior linemen. For a heavyweight he was exceptionally fast. He became known as "Mr. Inside," and Davis as "Mr. Outside." Together they were the "Touchdown Twins" and were both All-Americans three years in a row. During the years they played together West Point went undefeated, a perfect record marred only by a tie with Notre Dame in '46.

In nine games during the 1944 season Davis set NCAA records by averaging 11.5 yards per carry and scoring 20 touchdowns. He won the Maxwell Award and the Walter Camp Trophy as the player of the year, and finished second in the Heisman balloting. Davis again averaged 11.5 yards per carry in 1945, scored 18 touchdowns in nine games, and finished second in the Heisman voting to his teammate, Doc Blanchard. Injuries to Blanchard in 1946, and to quarterback Arnold Tucker, allowed defenses to stack against Davis, but Mr. Outside still averaged 5.8 yards and scored 13 touchdowns. He had a record-setting game against Navy, accounting for 265 yards of total offense, including a 40-yard TD run, a 30-yard TD pass reception, and a 27-yard TD pass. Against Michigan, Davis ran for 105 yards and a touchdown, completed 7 of 8 passes for 160 yards and a TD, and intercepted two passes. He won the Heisman Trophy and was named Athlete of the Year by the Associated Press.

In his collegiate career Davis gained 6,494 yards on 637 carries for an average of 10.2 yards per carry. He scored 59 touchdowns and passed for 12 more. Several of these marks set NCAA records. His average yards per carry is still a record. At the academy Davis was also a guard on the basketball team, the star of the baseball team, and a record-setting sprinter on the track team; 62 years after his graduation he still holds the academy's indoor 60 and outdoor 220 records. He also still holds the record point total for the Master of the Sword, a series of events testing speed, strength, spring, and agility. In 1987 West Point released a VHS tape of Army's football games, including the '45 and '46 seasons. Watch it and you will see that Mr. Outside is Mr. Incomparable—of any era.

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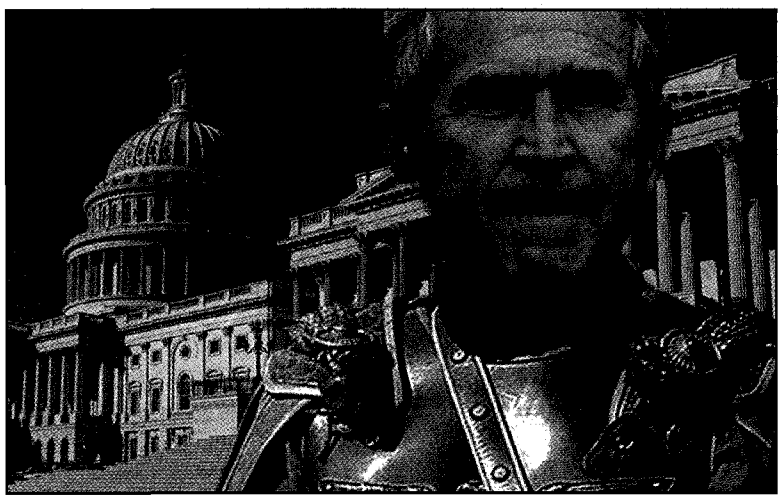
A Round Table Discussion

Can the Republic Be Restored?



Melanie Anderson

A Limited Presidency

From Cincinnatus to Caesar

by Clyde Wilson

The American president began as Cincinnatus, a patriot called to the temporary service of his country (a republican confederation). The president ends as Caesar, a despot of almost unlimited power, presiding over a global empire. Like the Caesars, in some quarters the president is even worshiped as a god. Cincinnatus was called because of his proved ability and patriotism. Caesar achieves power by fraud, bribery, convenient wars, and manipulation of the mob. As with Rome, candidates for the American emperor are sometimes selected by heredity, from the decayed descendants of powerful families: Roosevelts, Bushes, Rockefellers, Kennedys, Romneys, Gores.

In order to understand what the American president was meant to be, you have to look at the long period before the American War of Independence. For well over a century the people's representatives struggled with royal and propriety governors, empowered agents of a centralized power with an agenda of its own. The American Revolution (not very revolutionary) happened when the royal governors fled to the nearest British warship, and the people's representatives in each colony-now-state remained undisputed sovereigns.

It was understood that an executive power was necessary—a magistrate to see that the laws were enforced and the safety of the state was guarded. Unlike the royal governors, the chief magistrates created by the new constitutions were beholden to their legislatures. In most cases they were chosen by the legislature and served short terms, often only a year. They had no veto power and very little appointive power. Pennsylvania had a three-man executive. They were not even expected to be Cincinnatus, except in emergencies; Gov. John Rutledge of South Carolina, for example, carried out his duties to his occupied state from horseback. Executive power, clearly, was regarded as a necessary evil that had to be hemmed in.

The presidential office described in the Constitution of 1787 was in many ways an anomaly in history and a

Clyde Wilson is editor of a new edition of the works of John Taylor of Caroline to be published by Alethes Press.

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departure from settled understanding. It carried great potential for abuse, all of which has been realized. There were many (Federalists) who feared the people and who wanted a powerful executive to lend force and dignity to the new general government. Others accepted as a necessity that there must be a head of state to deal with European monarchies and agreed that, if the chief executive was to enforce the laws, he had a reasonable right to choose his officers.

But note that in appointments and foreign relations the president was to work closely with the senators, representatives of the states. It was long questioned whether he even had the right to remove officers who had been approved by the Senate. Until Andrew Jackson, no president thought he had the right to veto a bill just because he did not like it. He had to believe it was unconstitutional. We now live in a world in which many people think of the president as "commander in chief" of the government or even of all of us. But the Constitution meant only that he was to be the civilian chief operating officer of the Armed Forces. The organization and rules of the Armed Forces were to be created by Congress; and, in fear of an executive misuse of the military—so familiar to the classically educated Founding Fathers, who were also living in the age of Bonaparte—appropriations for the Armed Forces could never be made for more than two years.

The imperial presidency is a recent development. Andrew Jackson, through his popularity and choleric temper, slightly expanded the profile of the executive office. Lincoln, of course, usurped extraconstitutional authority with gay abandon. But it is interesting that most of his abuses of office did not become immediate precedents. When Grant left office in 1877, things returned to something resembling normal. Lincoln was never worshiped as a god while he was president—only afterward. Theodore Roosevelt made the president into a public celebrity as well as a chief magistrate. His cousin Franklin was adored by millions as a kind of father and protector. It was perhaps not until Kennedy that the president was actually worshiped by servile people unfit for free government. And even there, the Kennedy adulation was to a considerable extent a trumped-up creation of the fawning media and was not nearly as widespread as they would have us believe. It was Bush Minor who was our first emperor, able to do almost anything with only the merest murmurs of dissent from the Congress or the public.

For some, this is a good thing. (Of course, they will scribble away about the dangers of the "imperial presidency" when the other party is in power.) As our Founding Fathers knew, there are always many who seek safety and profit by flattering and clinging to the coattails of power. One fears that too much of the populace today cannot distinguish Cincinnatus from the horse he rode in on, much less from Caesar.

The destruction of states' rights and the centralization of power unchecked in the federal government have contributed to the creation of the imperial presidency. Even so, the office could not have developed as it has without the compliance of Congress. The Founding Fathers did not imagine that the Congress would be so faithless in its own duty that it would abet presidential usurpation. Nor was it foreseen that the president would become a party leader with an agenda to force through for the satisfaction of his supporters. And, of course, the complications of world wars, real and imagined, have played a large role. Beyond all this, there seems to be a sick spirit of leader worship across the land.

Could the president ever again become what he was intended to be—a person of recognized ability and integrity who is charged temporarily with seeing that the laws are faithfully executed and necessary relations with other governments are carried on—and nothing else?

Adams' Federalism

Limiting Power Through Balance

by John Willson

In 1786, John Adams wrote in his diary that a friend, "lamenting the differences of character between Virginia and New England," welcomed from Adams a recipe for a Chesapeake makeover: "I recommended to him town meetings, training days, town schools, and ministers"; these "are the scenes where New England men were formed." Because Adams started with what was so good at the base of a federal polity, he knew what the top should look like. Anything he might have to offer our current national chaos starts with that conviction.

His spiritual home was his farm in Braintree, and the institutions of New England represented to Adams about as happy a framework for republican government as mankind could hope for (and Adams knew more about the history of republics than any other American of his generation). He desired a federal republic that, first, could protect the New England nation and, second, keep the larger confederation intact.

If there was anything really "*novus*" in the *novus ordo seclorum*, it was truly limited government—a "law to limit

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law." For probably the first time in history, constitution-makers (on local, state, and national levels) consciously tried to divide sovereignty, to keep it from locating in any one place, interest, or office. This went against all conventional political wisdom, but it perfectly reflected the fierce local patriotism of diverse peoples in several preexisting colonial (or state) polities who agreed that it was necessary to combine into a workable whole.

James Madison famously called their solution "partly national and partly federal"—a phrase he would regret when the Hamiltonians got their hands on the system. But to a New Englander such as Adams the covenantal origins of the federal—from the Latin *foedus* ("covenant")—idea seemed to be ample protection against national power as well as ample opportunity for unity. To Adams, the key was balance. Balance required avoiding "simple" sovereignty in any one class, interest, or function of government—giving it rather "in fact, as well as morally," to the "whole body of the people." "My opinion is and always has been," he wrote, "that absolute power intoxicates alike despots, monarchs, aristocrats, democrats, Jacobins, and *sans-culottes*."

Adams learned the technique to achieve balance from his practical experience in drawing up the Massachusetts constitution of 1780. It required "mixed" government—in his mind, an American version of the ancient political problem of "the one, the few, and the many." By balancing the functions of government, putting a small or big power here, snatching some of it away and putting it there, the legislative, executive, and judicial sovereignties could also be controlled. Mixed government, Adams and many others of his generation knew, might still result in centralization even at the state level, so he wrote into the commonwealth (a synonym, in his mind, for *republic*) the historic and traditional rights of its citizens, frequent elections controlled at the local level, and the authority of the towns to ratify and also to be perpetually represented as communal bodies. It gave Massachusetts a strong government: one capable of acting, but one that was still on a tight leash held by the people.

Adams' Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts was probably the most influential model of the age. Its striking similarities to the U.S. Constitution of 1787 testify to that, although, of course, Adams was not in Philadelphia that summer. He was, however, present in the central government during its first 12 years. If he had at times been a republican enthusiast, by 1800 Adams was convinced that Jeffersonian Republicans and Hamiltonian "high" Federalists were ideologues, alike practitioners of the "science of Idiocy." As parties, they ate each other's waste: "Hogs of Westphalia are a saving brood. / What one lets drop, the other takes as food," he wrote in 1815. He still held that the federal constitution was "the greatest single effort of national deliberation that the world has ever seen," but its balance was evermore in jeopardy.

Adams was an agrarian federalist. He loved real property, local government, and family life, and thought there was a considerable amount of virtue in Americans, in general, and New Englanders, in particular. He was suspicious of plutocracy in all its forms and in all its locations—banks, the military, government. He had no more use for "state sovereignty" than he did for its nemesis, nationalism. He wanted a modest, even isolationist, foreign policy (he always thought his greatest service to his country was keeping it out of war with France in 1798) that promoted exchange but not alliances.

Adams often judged the character of a nation by how carefully its farmers tended their manure piles. Such a man is not likely to become a despot. ©

Just One More Thing

Repudiating the Republic's Debt

by William J. Quirk

Alexander Hamilton said debt is a blessing: It oils the wheels of business and enhances national power. Jefferson said debt is a curse: It binds future generations without their consent, striking at the very heart of the Republic—the consent of the governed. *Bloomberg News* reports (February 9) that the so-called financial crisis has added $9.7 trillion in borrowing and guarantees to the national debt. In one swoop, the national debt jumped from $10 trillion to $19.7 trillion. Hamilton has won. The country is burdened with a perpetual debt—a debt that cannot be repaid.

William J. Quirk is the author, most recently, of Courts & Congress: America's Unwritten Constitution.

On November 26, 1798, Thomas Jefferson wrote to John Taylor that we need one more thing to complete the Founding Fathers' work:

> I wish it were possible to obtain a single amendment to our Constitution. I would be willing to depend on that alone for the reduction of the administration of our government to the genuine principles of our Constitution. I mean an additional article, taking from the federal government the power of borrowing.

Lyndon Johnson and George W. Bush understood that the people would not pay taxes to pay for their unpopular wars. They could only be financed by borrowing. The

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cost had to be hidden. Yet, the cost must be paid, and the cost of evading the basic democratic check is horrific: The citizenry is alienated from the government.

On September 6, 1789, Jefferson admonished James Madison from Paris that the country should get straight, "at the threshold of our new government," how we are going to keep debt from destroying the democracy. Jefferson's premise, which he believed to be "self-evident," is that one generation cannot—either morally or in fact—bind another. It follows that "No generation can contract debts greater than may be paid during the course of its own existence." The "earth belongs in usufruct [trust] to the living . . . [T]he dead have neither powers nor rights over it." If one generation can charge another for its debts, "then the earth would belong to the dead and not to the living generation." Jefferson continued: "The conclusion then, is, that neither the representatives of a nation, nor the whole nation itself assembled, can validly engage debts beyond what they may pay in their own time." Madison wrote back that he generally agreed but thought debt was justifiable if it built a project that benefited the future taxpayer—a useful bridge, for example. Jefferson answered that the power to borrow was too dangerous to allow exceptions—any exception would expand to destroy the prohibition.

Madison's argument is plausible, but Jefferson's camel's-nose-under-the-tent concern was right. No government will stay within Madison's exception. World War II, the last time this country could make any kind of legitimate case for a benefit to future generations, was in fact financed 47 percent by pay-as-you-go taxes, which provided $137 billion out of a total cost of $304 billion.

Almost all of our debt is what Jefferson called "Louis XV debt." "Suppose," Jefferson wrote Madison,

> Louis XV . . . had said to the moneylenders of Holland, "Give us money, that we may eat, drink and be merry in our day; and on condition you will demand no interest till the end of thirty-four years, you shall then, forever after, receive an annual interest of 15 per cent." The money is lent on these conditions, is divided among the people, eaten, drunk, and squandered. Would the present generation be obliged to apply the produce of the earth and of their labour, to replace their dissipations? Not at all.

Jefferson could not get his 1798 amendment adopted, but the country got more chances to adopt Jeffersonian principles in 1994, 1995, and 1996, when Sen. Sam Nunn (D-GA) proposed a Balanced Budget Amendment. At the time, the national debt was large (about four trillion dollars) but could have been dealt with. It was not yet a perpetual debt.

Senator Nunn called his legislation the "Jefferson Amendment." It required that Congress balance expenses with revenues. The public consistently supported Nunn's amendment by 75-percent margins. The states, which must balance their own budgets, would certainly have ratified Nunn's amendment, making it part of the Constitution, if the Senate would have submitted it to them. Nunn needed a two-thirds vote in the Senate and came very close—within a few votes, time after time. But he was defeated by the Clinton Cabinet, which argued that the economy would crash if the federal government couldn't borrow. A New York senator said the amendment's passage could "lead to the devastation of the banking industry." With the defeat of the Nunn amendment, the boat sailed for the Republic.

Our present situation is the same as Jefferson's hypothetical, except our lenders are mostly Chinese. The country is burdened with an accelerating Louis XV debt. Are we stuck? Are future generations obliged to apply the produce of the earth and their labor to pay for past dissipations? "Not at all." ©

Is America a "Republic"?

The Most Important Distinction

by Donald Livingston

I entirely agree with the spirit of this roundtable but not with the language of restoring "*the* Republic." The United States is not now and has never been a republic. It is a federation of states, each of which, in Article IV of the Constitution, is guaranteed a republican form of government. But a federation of republics is not itself a republic any more than the federation of nations in the United Nations, or in the European Union, is a nation. A federation is a service agency of the political units that compose it. Whatever else a republic might be, it is not a service agency of something else. So instead of talking about "restoring the old Republic," we should talk of restoring republicanism in a federation of states. And this can only mean recalling the vast domain of unenumerated powers that the Constitution reserves to the states and which have been usurped by that artificial corporation, known as the United States, created by the states for their welfare.

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This is not a quibble with words. To talk of *the* Republic inclines one to think of America as a single political society in the manner of Joseph Story, Daniel Webster, and Abraham Lincoln. In this view, the states are service agencies created by the sovereign will of the American people in the aggregate. That will is expressed through the central government, which, for all practical purposes, has the final say on the limits of its powers. This means that the states are merely administrative units of a unitary American state. If so, they are not republics at all, but counties. This is how Lincoln viewed them. He asked, "What is this particular sacredness of a State? . . . If a State, in one instance, and a county in another, should be equal in extent of territory, and equal in number of people, wherein is that State any better than a county?" Lincoln was tone deaf to the deep social bonds rooted in place and historic identity that are essential to the republican tradition—the bonds that made it rational for Socrates to take the hemlock and Jefferson Davis to say that if his state seceded he would "hug [Mississippi] to his heart," and that compelled Robert E. Lee to risk all to protect his beloved Virginia. A Lincoln scholar, and an admirer, recently acknowledged that "[Lincoln] was intimately attached to almost no one, and this was how he believed community relationships–local, state, and national–should best function. . . . Lincoln's imagined America was a nation of strangers." This is a perfect picture of a modern unitary state, modeled on that of Thomas Hobbes, with an all-powerful central authority guaranteeing rootless and egoistic individuals their "civil rights."

It is this unitary state, "one and indivisible," that Lincoln and the Republican Party meant when they spoke of "the Republic." But such a regime is no more a republic than is the "republic" of the French Revolution or the Peoples' Republic of China. When Lincoln looked at Virginia he could not see a genuine political society two-and-a-half centuries old; one that was the leader in forming the American federation; fabled in song and story; and known as the mother of presidents and the mother of states (including Lincoln's own). All he could see was an aggregate of individuals in rebellion against "the Republic"—the central government of a would-be Hobbesian unitary state.

Before Lincoln's "republican" rhetoric, Americans most often described their polity as a "union," a "federation," or a "confederation." And when it was described as a "republic" or a "nation," it was usually understood to mean a federation or union. For example, in a speech celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Constitution, John Quincy Adams describes America as a "confederated nation," held together by "kindly sympathies" and "common interests." And he went on to say that, should these social bonds fail, "far better will it be for the people of the disunited states to part in friendship from each other, than to be held together by constraint." Thirteen years later Adams would sign a document stating that the annexation of Texas would justify the secession of New England. That is the spirit of American republicanism—rooted, as it must be, in a bold acknowledgment of state and local sovereignty.

The first step toward restoring genuine republicanism is to invert the Lincolnian inversion of republican language by describing America as a *federation*, not a republic. Today, such speech might appear odd and even radical. But there is no alternative. Talk of "restoring the Republic" cannot escape the connotations of the inverted Lincolnian "Republic." But that regime does not need restoration. Not only is it flourishing, it is now on steroids. ◁▷

Reviewing Judicial Review

A Government of Justices

by Stephen B. Presser

In the most famous defense of the U.S. Supreme Court's power to declare acts of the federal and state legislatures unconstitutional, Alexander Hamilton argued that it was the Court's job only to implement the will of the people as expressed in the Constitution. If the Court went beyond that—interpreting the document to include things that did not reflect the people's original understanding—then the justices would be infringing on liberty itself. Quoting Montesquieu on this point, Hamilton stressed that judges should not be legislators and implied that they should leave the creation of new law to other branches of government, or to the people themselves.

That was American orthodoxy for most of our history, but beginning in 1937, the Court—frightened by Franklin D. Roosevelt's overwhelming electoral success and concerned by his charge that the justices were applying "horse and buggy" notions to their interpretation of the Constitution—began to rewrite that document, in accordance with the President's preferences. The first thing the justices changed was the allocation of power between the state and federal governments, as they began to permit Congress to regulate virtually all of American life. In the 1950's, 60's, and 70's, the justices, often influenced by trendy psychological or sociological theories, took control of state education, of state and local law enforcement, and of legislative reapportionment. In 1973, out of whole

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cloth, the Supreme Court created a constitutional right to abortion, and, in similar acts of judicial legerdemain, the Court forbade mandatory prayer and Bible reading in America's public schools.

Campaigning for president, Sen. John McCain repeated George W. Bush's claim that, if elected, he would appoint judges who would understand the difference between judging and legislating. Barack Obama, a former constitutional-law professor who is more closely in tune with the current biases of the academy, declared that he would choose justices who had some sense of what it meant to be an outsider, or a member of a minority, or a teenage mother. Obama was strongly signaling that he believes the judicial role is to change the law in a more progressive direction—toward the reallocation of resources and power to minorities, women, labor, and other favored constituencies of the Democratic Party.

Obama was the choice of a majority of the American people, and, alas, popular opinion now seems to reject what we Americans have always gloried in: the rule of law itself. Can anything be done? Have we completely lost our cherished notion that ours was supposed to be "a government of laws and not of men"? For decades Republicans thought that, if only Republican presidents could put conservative jurists on the Court, there could be a return to the jurisprudence of the Framers, but with some exceptions (Scalia, Thomas, Roberts, and Alito), this strategy has failed. Some—most notably, *Chronicles* contributor William Quirk—have urged Congress to control the Court by "stripping" it of jurisdiction to meddle in areas better left to the states, but that requires a Congress committed to reining in judicial abuses. We now have a congressional majority that celebrates them. Worse, the few efforts that Congress has undertaken to strip jurisdiction—in the area of wartime executive discretion, for example—have been blatantly and wrongly rebuffed by a majority of the Court itself.

Probably the only means of restoring the Republic's original understanding of law is to remind the American people how that understanding came to be. The Framers, having studied the manner in which English monarchs misused the courts to serve their own purposes, sought to ensure that our law would protect citizens' most important interests: life, liberty, and property (after John Locke's formulation). Those Framers also understood that there could be no order without law, no law without morality, and no morality without religion. They were, in short, the antithesis of the secular humanists who are now ascendant in our country. Those in charge are currently in the process of imperiling private property itself, and one can only hope that they do not extend their efforts to endanger life and liberty. Out of the current chaos, however, may come a realization of an earlier, better way.

The Classless Republic

An Impossible Society

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

I cannot see the least possibility of recreating either an elite republican class (if, by "elite," one means an untitled aristocracy) or the American Republic itself. The notion of a republic is a product of classical political thinking, which is now virtually dead in the Western world, and never appeared elsewhere. Not only has the classical political tradition become virtually extinct, the ability to think in classical terms seems to have been lost as well.

Classical republicanism cannot survive a modern social and political anomaly that no political tradition before the postmodern era could possibly have envisioned. That is the rise of an elite that is revolutionary, not conservative or even establishmentarian. A republic characterized by a bicameral government in which both the upper house and the executive branch are hostile to the traditional notion of an establishment is antithetical to the work as well as to the vision of the American Founding Fathers—in fact, of every republican theorist and statesman. The resulting chaos is as great as if Louis XIV, instead of attempting weakly to accommodate the revolutionary spirit that succeeded in toppling the French monarchy, had himself become an enthusiastic convert to Jacobinism. A society in which the destructionists, the antiestablishmentarians, and the professional political and cultural sappers are not only drawn from, but actually constitute, the elite class is the most extreme case of the world turned upside down. Unfortunately, the world cannot survive upside down, like Tweedledum and Tweedledee standing on their heads for the rest of their lives. The situation is as unnatural to human society as a country run by the inhabitants of a mental asylum would be, and as sustainable.

Alexis de Tocqueville thought that a true aristocracy must be based on land ownership. He was right. When the material prosperity and the political and social power of an upper class, or "elite," are based on something other than land, which is an actual portion of the bounded national territory, the establishment eventually ceases to care for, or feel a commitment to, their country, its people,

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and its future. The transition from landed to industrial wealth in the 19th and 20th centuries weakened that commitment, without destroying it completely. It was left to the postmodern globalist economy—based on abstract wealth, on information, and on electronic communications—to erase altogether the attenuated loyalties of the elite class.

Over half a century ago T.S. Eliot, in *Notes Towards a Definition of Culture*, had his say on the insufficiencies of the meritocracy as compared with the virtues of traditional aristocracy. By definition, meritocrats rise on their merits. They also fall on them, as they are supplanted and cast down by rising individuals who contest their hold on society's top niches, in the same manner that a coalition of nomad lions seizes a pride from older or weaker males, or those with less prowess in combat. While meritocrats are capable of making individual contributions to society, they, their families, and, more importantly, their descendants do not remain long enough at the top to establish a system of dominant values and guiding traditions for future generations to preserve and follow. Consequently, while talent and ability are always renewing themselves, the permanent things come to be regarded as transient ones, dependent upon social whim and fashion, while the traditions that bind and develop a society over time are denied a chance to develop.

It has been suggested that a particular type of educational institution might be devised that is capable of training a responsible elite class. That, of course, is what the French have been attempting since Napoleon founded the *lycée* system. In fact, something of the sort has existed in the United States since World War II, when James Conan Bryant of Harvard proposed that "democracy" be made synonymous with an equal opportunity for all to enter the meritocracy (which would then be democratically entitled to lord it over the lives of the great mass of commoners). Robert B. Reich, President Clinton's secretary of labor, in his book *The Work of Nations* (1992), paints a portrait, as devastating as it is fawning, of what he calls the "symbolic managers": the latest incarnation of the exclusively educated New Class whose narcissism, social irresponsibility, and contempt for their social and intellectual inferiors makes Marie Antoinette look like Jane Addams. *Noblesse oblige* can be inherited, but never learned.

Bertrand de Jouvenel thought that power could be defeated only by cells created by itself that, in time, would work to destroy power from within and usurp its place. Such may indeed be the case with power in America. Yet it is hard to imagine how the constituent members of such a cell, nurtured within the body of the Beast, could have the faintest notion of the principles of republicanism, in fact of the classical tradition itself.

The United States, In Congress Assembled

What Burnham Saw

by Scott P. Richert

"All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States . . ." Thus run the first words of Article I, Section 1, of the U.S. Constitution, clearly laying out the Framers' understanding of the nature and the role of Congress. Everything else enumerated in Article I—the various powers of Congress to raise an army and to make a declaration of war, to mint currency, to establish uniform regulations for naturalization and interstate commerce, and so on—are all, in the thinking of the Framers of the Constitution, legislative functions to be performed by the representatives of the several states, in Congress assembled. This corporate nature of Congress is something that we often forget—and something which helps point the way toward a restoration of a government that is truly federal, rather than national.

John F. Kennedy's court historian, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., popularized (though he did not invent) the phrase "the imperial presidency" in his book of the same name. Yet a decade and a half before Schlesinger published his partisan attack, masquerading as political history, on Kennedy's old foe Richard M. Nixon, a more serious student of the American political tradition, James Burnham, had already written everything that Schlesinger got right, and much more that Schlesinger got wrong.

Burnham's 1959 book *Congress and the American Tradition* is his most conservative, and most consistently underrated, work. Asked by publisher Henry Regnery, in the wake of the McCarthy hearings, to write a defense of Congress's investigatory powers (which are never mentioned in the Constitution), Burnham gave Regnery much more: a serious work of political history that revives the Framers' understanding of the nature and role of Congress and places that understanding within the Anglo-American (and more broadly European) political tradition.

What Burnham saw, and what Schlesinger and so many others later failed (and continue to fail) to see, is that the legislative power of Congress is as much (if not more) a

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constituent part of federalism as it is of the separation of powers. Burnham makes a persuasive argument that the structure of the legislative branch, as the Framers conceived it, was intended to prevent the sovereignty of the several states from being subsumed into the sovereignty of the federal government—which, he rightly recognized, meant the power of the executive branch: the imperial presidency.

The federal executive was never meant to be a national office in the sense that we find it today. The president was to act as the head of state when one was required, but more importantly, he was to ensure the faithful execution of the laws passed by the states in Congress assembled: that is, the laws that the representatives of each state agreed were in the common interest of all of their states.

But the evolution (or devolution) of the American constitutional system—both through formal amendments, such as the 17th, which provided for the direct election of U.S. senators, and through the growth of the population beyond the bounds that could be foreseen by the Framers and the destruction of traditional culture—has destroyed the understanding of Congress as an assembly of states gathered to create legislation in their common interest and, consequently, allowed the executive branch to usurp, not only the powers of Congress, but of the states themselves, and of their citizens.

There is a way back, but it requires senators and congressmen to forget everything they think they know about the role of Congress. As long as Congress is regarded as an assembly of individual legislators and simply one of three branches of a national government, the centralization of power in the executive will continue, because the very aim of Congress is wrong.

Should each state delegation begin approaching legislation with an eye toward the good of its state, however, perhaps something of the original understanding could be recovered. Rather than look to Republican legislators to thwart the plans of Democratic presidents (and *vice versa*), states that began to approach federal legislation as South Carolinians or Illinoisans or Arizonans might begin to question whether such legislation is really in the interest of the people they represent. Such patriotism, it is true, seems unlikely; but the current economic crisis and a massive federal debt that will never be repaid may open up opportunities. In the near future, all federal mandates are likely to become unfunded federal mandates, increasing the burden on the states at the very moment when they are least able to bear it.

In normal circumstances, economic self-interest is a poor substitute for the ties of kith and kin, but in an age when the latter are denigrated, perhaps the former stands a better chance of bringing about change we can believe in. ◈

A Share in the *Patria*

What a Republic Is Good For

by Aaron D. Wolf

God likes farmers. Not gigantic corporate agribusiness, but farmers. He made man *from* the dirt and *for* the dirt, to cultivate His Garden. *Adam* means "of the red" or "of the soil."

When the children of Israel clamored for a king, so that they might rely on him to protect them from foreign invaders, the prophet warned them that "he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants." God had been their sovereign, but they wanted what the other nations had. So He gave them what they wanted.

Any system of government, from a democracy to an aristocracy to a monarchy, is capable of drowning its people in tyranny. "I see no infallible criterion for defining the nature of a government, except its acts," wrote John Taylor of Caroline in *Construction Construed and Constitutions Vindicated* (1820). "If the acts of a monarchy, aristocracy and democracy are the same, these forms of government are to a nation essentially the same also. To contend for forms only, is to fight for shadows."

How, then, should we define the nature of a republic? The word itself was batted around by all of the Founding Fathers, but its usage varied. John Adams, who favored aristocracy and "balanced power," wrote that the only "rational" definition of *republic* is "a government, in which all men, rich and poor, magistrates and subjects, officers and people, masters and servants, the first citizen and the last, are equally subject to the laws."

Taylor assailed this sort of "republic," which puts its faith in the "rule of law." Answering Adams in 1814 (*An Inquiry into the Principles and Policy of the Government of the United States*), he asked how this was any different from the government from which they had declared independence. What guarantees that the law to which everyone is "equally subject" is just—or good?

> [T]he bishop would be subject to law in receiving his benefice and his tythes, the labourer, in paying them; a nobility is subject to law in exercising its privileges; a corporation, in growing rich by the aid

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> of its charter; a bank, in collecting from a nation, usury upon nominal money; and a king, in receiving a million, and expending thirty millions annually in corruption and patronage, at the national expense.

Adams' imagined government would counter this injustice with a "balance of power," by which each class, emerging "naturally" according to a divine distribution of talent, would find equal representation. But do such classes really arise "by nature," according to "God's design"? Taylor argues that Adams' classes are artificial—special interests created by laws and sustained by government. (Government's creation of a standing army, for example, creates a "soldier class," a military interest. Central banking creates a banking interest. *Etc.*) And man's lust for power being what it is, these artificial classes would (did) seek to advance their standing among the others, if not dominate them altogether, even taking the moral high ground for doing just so. "One tyrant may thank God that he is not another tyrant."

During the infant days of the United States, the means by which the federal government was creating this phony aristocracy was, according to Taylor, its control of the economy, through central banking and taxation—unjust transfers of wealth from one interest to another.

> Wealth, established by law, violates the principle, which induced the American states to wage war with Britain. It separates the imposer from the payer of taxes. No nation would tax itself to enrich an order or separate interest. When therefore a nation is so taxed, it must proceed from the power of the order itself, which is invariably the imposer and receiver of the tax; whilst the rest of the nation is the payer.

For Taylor, a true, sustainable republic is not characterized by a "balance of power" among artificial interest groups but by self-government. "The distinguishing superiorities of our policy, are, the sovereignty of the people; a republican government, or a government producing publick or national good; and a thorough system of responsible representation."

Who, then, are these sovereign "people," and what is this "good"?

The people are the farmers. At the time of the War of Independence, 95 percent of Americans were engaged in farming. And as many as two thirds of the farming families owned their own land. The prospect of owning a farm was what had made the colonies attractive in the first place. The wealth they sought in America was not cash but crops. But this way of life had been threatened by a distant central government that was cash-strapped and weary from financing its own imperial adventures. The small colonial farmer found it difficult to hold on to his land when the crown began to manipulate the money supply. Slapping taxes on him and stifling free trade only made things worse. What had once been thought a vast land in which a man could own his own farm, pass it on to his son, and help to establish his other children on farms of their own threatened to become a land of tenants, subservient to the central government.

The Federalists' "consolidated republic" threatened to do just the same. Federalist fiscal policy created new interests, a new Court Party of paper wealth. These sundry interests could not live without the farmers, yet they must live *off* them. "Mankind are united by the necessity for subsistence in a common interest," Taylor wrote to Adams.

> Those who furnish the subsistence, pay all the taxes. As subsistence flows from the earth, that may be called the mother of men, liable to make all the disbursements they need. Hence, all, or nearly all taxes, must be ultimately paid by agriculture, and ought of course to be inflicted by her . . .

According to the Jeffersonian tradition, of which Taylor was the greatest exemplar, the farmer is capable of self-government. His is the only vocation that is "natural"—that is not a creation of government. He depends on God to sustain him. His hands know the soil and the hard work necessary to cultivate it. His product sustains his family and his community. His people and his soil are his interest. Thus, he takes up his arms to defend hearth and home in the local militia, and the mantle of statesman when called upon—all the while eager, as Taylor was, to get back to his land, to the plow. "And the interdependence of such solid citizens," wrote M.E. Bradford, "all of them capable of honor in each other's eyes, all with a share in the *patria*, is the closest we can come to the providentially provided Garden or 'golden age' under the present, unpropitious dispensation."

This is the true republican ideal—a nation of farmers. It abounds not it laws but in corn. Its people are defined not by party affiliation or political law but by the *mores majorum*, the "customs of the fathers." It is the agrarian republic Cato wrote of when he spoke of his ancestors who, "when they would praise a worthy man," would say "good husbandman," "good farmer."

Those who would see a republic restored in our time should first seek to be worthy of that adulation, in the season allotted each of us before we return to the earth from whence we came. ◈

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The Martyrdom of Chas Freeman

Failing the Israel Lobby's Litmus Test

by Justin Raimondo

It was a cold, blustery day in Washington, D.C., when the spies met their mark. The place: Union Station. The mark: one Lawrence Franklin, then a 56-year-old Iran specialist who worked as a top official at the Pentagon. Franklin was convinced that Israel was being shortchanged by the United States, and that Iran posed a real threat to U.S. troops in Iraq. He had already divulged reams of classified information, including sensitive data about Al Qaeda, U.S. military operations in Iraq, and information about the 1996 Khobar Towers attack—but his handlers wanted more, and he was quite willing. Franklin, described by the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz* as "an ideologue who believes wholeheartedly in the neo-conservative approach," was later found to have secured an entire library of classified documents in his Arlington, Virginia, home, a treasure trove for his handlers. Now, on March 10, 2003, he was going to meet them—Steve Rosen, the chief lobbyist at the American Israel Political Affairs Committee (AIPAC), and Keith Weissman, AIPAC's top point man on Iran—outside Washington's busy Union Station. Like something out of a spy novel, in the early morning hours, "the three men moved from one restaurant to another restaurant, and then finished the meeting in an empty restaurant."

Are spies usually such picky eaters—or were they just afraid of being followed?

Judge T.S. Ellis, who has presided over cases involving the "AIPAC espionage scandal" since charges were brought in the summer of 2005, recently ruled that the government must prove that defendants Rosen and Weissman knew they were harming the United States and that their actions were illegal. If all that sneaking around Union Station doesn't prove this, nothing will. According to their defenders, Rosen and Weissman were just ordinary "private citizens," doing what journalists do—ferreting out information that everyone has a right to know. Yet there was nothing ordinary about their meetings with Israeli-embassy officials—possibly including former Israeli ambassador to the United States Danny Ayalon, now a member of the Knesset representing the racist, neofascist Yisrael Beiteinu party of Avigdor Lieberman—at which they handed over classified information gleaned from Franklin.

Franklin pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 12 years and a fine, a soft punishment predicated on his willingness to testify on behalf of the prosecution. The trial of Rosen and Weissman has been delayed several times. This has been the deliberate strategy of the defense lawyers, and it has proved remarkably successful, predicated as it is on graymail—the willingness of the defense to demand the revelation of classified information in open court, on the grounds that a fair trial would otherwise be impossible. Since the government's case is based on extensive recordings of conversations between the defendants and their contacts, the battle over what can be made public has been fought for years, with the courts generally ruling in favor of openness. Judge Ellis has even ruled in favor of subpoenaing a long list of current and former government officials, including Condoleezza Rice; former senior State Department officials Richard Armitage, Marc Grossman, Matthew Bryza, and William Burns; and former top Defense Department officials Douglas Feith and Paul Wolfowitz. If you're getting the distinct impression that this is one trial which will never take place, you may indeed be right.

As the years have rolled by, and the stalling tactics of the defense have been faithfully enabled by clueless judges, the rehabilitation of Rosen as a commentator and even a leader of the pro-Israel lobby in Washington has been a real sight to behold. Rosen is described by the Jewish newspaper *Forward* as the real "spark plug" behind AIPAC's efforts to lobby the executive branch just as vigorously as it had managed to leash Congress. He singlehandedly turned AIPAC into the legendary arbiter of U.S. policy in the Middle East, the one-stop shop for information and talking points on key policy-making questions relating to the Jewish state. Such a man is not going to remain quiet for very long, and his gradual comeback, after a remarkably short interregnum, as a key player in Obama's Washington is a dark portent. In interviews with the media, Rosen complained that he couldn't find a job, that he was being unfairly shunned—after all, don't spies have feelings, and a need for income, too?—until he finally wound up at the Middle East Forum, a Washington think tank founded by pro-Israel fanatic Richard Pipes, who claims Barack Obama is a former practicing Muslim.

It was a long way down from the heights he'd reached as the key player at AIPAC, but a man's got to do what a man's got to do. He set up shop on the Middle East Forum's website, with a column called *Obama Mideast Monitor*. He

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filled it with news of incoming and possible appointments in the new administration, and it was he who fired the first shot at Charles "Chas" Freeman, the distinguished diplomat and intelligence specialist who famously translated for Nixon in China and even more famously is a contrarian in the city of conformists. He has served as assistant secretary of defense for international-security affairs, U.S. ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, principal deputy assistant secretary of state for African affairs, deputy chief of mission and *chargé d'affaires* in Bangkok and Beijing, director of Chinese affairs at the U.S. State Department, and distinguished fellow at the United States Institute of Peace and the Institute of National Security Studies. Freeman has worked with more than 100 foreign governments in East and South Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and both Western and Eastern Europe. Called out of retirement by Adm. Dennis Blair, newly appointed chief of National Intelligence, to head up the National Intelligence Council, Freeman was characterized by the accused spy Rosen as follows:

> Readers of this blog know that I have been generally quite positive about the appointments the new Adminsitration [*sic*] is making for Middle East policy positions. Today's news is quite different. . . . Chas W. Freeman, Jr., the former U.S. ambassador to Saudi Arabia, will become chairman of the National Intelligence Council, and may at times participate in daily intelligence briefings to President Obama. This is a profoundly disturbing appointment, if the report is correct. Freeman is a strident critic of Israel, and a textbook case of the old-line Arabism that afflicted American diplomacy at the time the state of Israel was born. His views of the region are what you would expect in the Saudi foreign ministry, with which he maintains an extremely close relationship, not the top CIA position for analytic products going to the President of the United States.

Rosen then cites various remarks regarding the state of Israel in which Freeman decries America's "unconditional support" for the Israeli government's every action, and denounces the Israeli occupation and settlement of Arab lands as "inherently violent."

The next day, Rosen came up with more choice quotations of Freeman on the subject of Israel, including this excerpt:

> Americans need to be clear about the consequences of continuing our current counterproductive approaches to security in the Middle East. We have paid heavily and often in treasure in the past for our unflinching support and unstinting subsidies of Israel's approach to managing its relations with the Arabs. Five years ago we began to pay with the blood of our citizens here at home. We are now paying with the lives of our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines on battlefields in several regions of the realm of Islam, with more said by our government's neoconservative mentors to be in prospect. Our policies in Afghanistan and Iraq are adding to the threats to our security and well-being, not reducing them. They have added and are adding to our difficulties and those of allies and partners, including Israel. They are not advancing the resolution of these problems or making anyone more secure. They degrade our moral standing and diminish our value as an ally. They delight our enemies and dismay our friends.

Freeman is clearly a dangerous man—at least from an Israel First perspective.

The signal had been sent, and the war drums began beating. *Politico*'s Ben Smith reported the appointment as "A Test for the Israel Lobby," and the Amen Corner took its cue from there. The cry went up from all points on the neocon compass—the "left" over at *The New Republic*, the right over at *The Weekly Standard*, and the center over at *The Atlantic*, where Jeffrey Goldberg railed at Freeman for daring to promote the realist tome *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*, a detailed scholarly study that documents the lobby's decisive influence on policy-making, which Goldberg equates with *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. The focus soon shifted away from Freeman's views on Israel, however, as the neocons took a different tack: He's a foreign agent. The nonprofit foundation he has headed since his retirement received Saudi money, albeit only one fortieth of its total assets, but then there's the China connection: Freeman, you see, served as a member of the international advisory board of the Chinese government-owned international China National Offshore Oil Company (CNOOC), which has business dealings in Iran. The China meme was reinforced by the revelation of a private e-mail exchange list, on which the former ambassador was describing the popular feeling inside China regarding the Tiananmen Square incident:

> [T]he truly unforgivable mistake of the Chinese authorities was the failure to intervene on a timely basis to nip the demonstrations in the bud, rather than—as would have been both wise and efficacious—to intervene with force when all other measures had failed to restore domestic tranquility to Beijing and other major urban centers in China. In this optic, the Politburo's response to the mob scene at "Tian'anmen" stands as a monument to overly cautious behavior on the part of the leadership, not as an example of rash action. . . .
>
> I do not believe it is acceptable for any country to allow the heart of its national capital to be occupied by dissidents intent on disrupting the normal functions of government, however appealing to foreigners their propaganda may be. Such folk, whether they represent a veterans' "Bonus Army" or a "student uprising" on behalf of "the goddess

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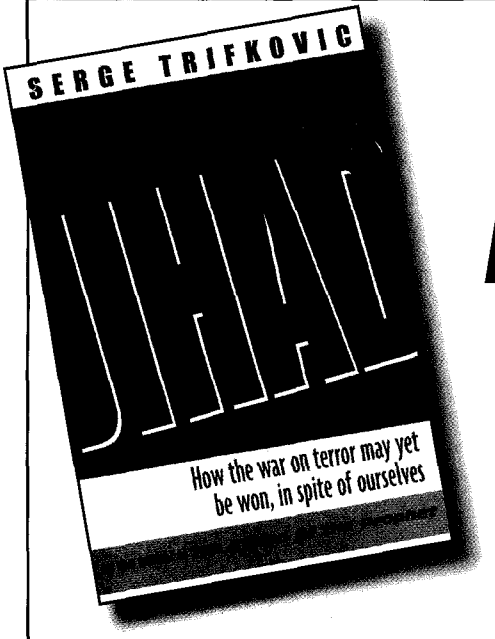
of democracy" should expect to be displaced with despatch [*sic*] from the ground they occupy.

That Freeman was not describing his own views but relating those of the Chinese man on the street, was lost in the shouting. Immediately, he was a target of the "human rights" crowd, including the grievously misnamed Human Rights Watch, which up until recently refused to acknowledge hundreds of civilian casualties in Georgia's invasion of South Ossetia. With the Israel Firsters and the "human rights" crowd up in arms over his appointment, Freeman didn't stand a chance. His letter explaining his withdrawal says it all:

> I have concluded that the barrage of libelous distortions of my record would not cease upon my entry into office. The effort to smear me and to destroy my credibility would instead continue. I do not believe the National Intelligence Council could function effectively while its chair was under constant attack by unscrupulous people with a passionate attachment to the views of a political faction in a foreign country. . . .
>
> The libels on me and their easily traceable email trails show conclusively that there is a powerful lobby determined to prevent any view other than its own from being aired, still less to factor in American understanding of trends and events in the Middle East. The tactics of the Israel Lobby plumb the depths of dishonor and indecency and include character assassination, selective misquotation, the willful distortion of the record, the fabrication of falsehoods, and an utter disregard for the truth. The aim of this Lobby is control of the policy process through the exercise of a veto over the appointment of people who dispute the wisdom of its views, the substitution of political correctness for analysis, and the exclusion of any and all options for decision by Americans and our government other than those that it favors.
>
> There is a special irony in having been accused of improper regard for the opinions of foreign governments and societies by a group so clearly intent on enforcing adherence to the policies of a foreign government—in this case, the government of Israel.

The pill is all the more bitter because the inciter of this lynch mob, Steve Rosen, may have been the spider at the center of a web of espionage that reaches from Washington, D.C., to Tel Aviv. The Rosen litmus test—no criticism of Israel, however mild, shall be permitted in the upper echelons of power—has now been applied successfully to the Obama administration. We are barely past the first hundred days of the Obama administration, and already the Israel Lobby has reestablished the veto power it enjoyed during the Bush years.

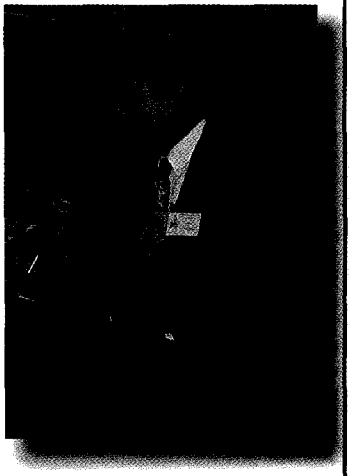
From the author of *The Sword of the Prophet*



*"The victory will come not by conquering Mecca for America but **by disengaging America from Mecca** and by excluding Mecca from America. Eliminating the risk is impossible. Managing it wisely, resolutely, and permanently is something attainable."*

Defeating Jihad

by Srdja Trifkovic



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The Color of the Ocean Last Summer

by Jonathan Chaves

Some things cannot be remembered—
one of them is the color of the ocean
last summer
or even yesterday.

The brilliance in memory turns to darkness,
the sharp blue of the edges of the waves
becomes the dull blade
of a ceremonial dagger
worn a century ago.

The coolness which makes us gasp
in its gentle embrace,
the blue wind,
the loving arm of the harbor
and its fishing boats—
all become something like the sound
of a door closing somewhere
in a deserted mansion.

A man hears this sound in the distance—
the blue, the brilliance,
the arm of the harbor—
and he paints a picture
which hangs in a gallery
few ever visit,

and even the painting is hard to remember.

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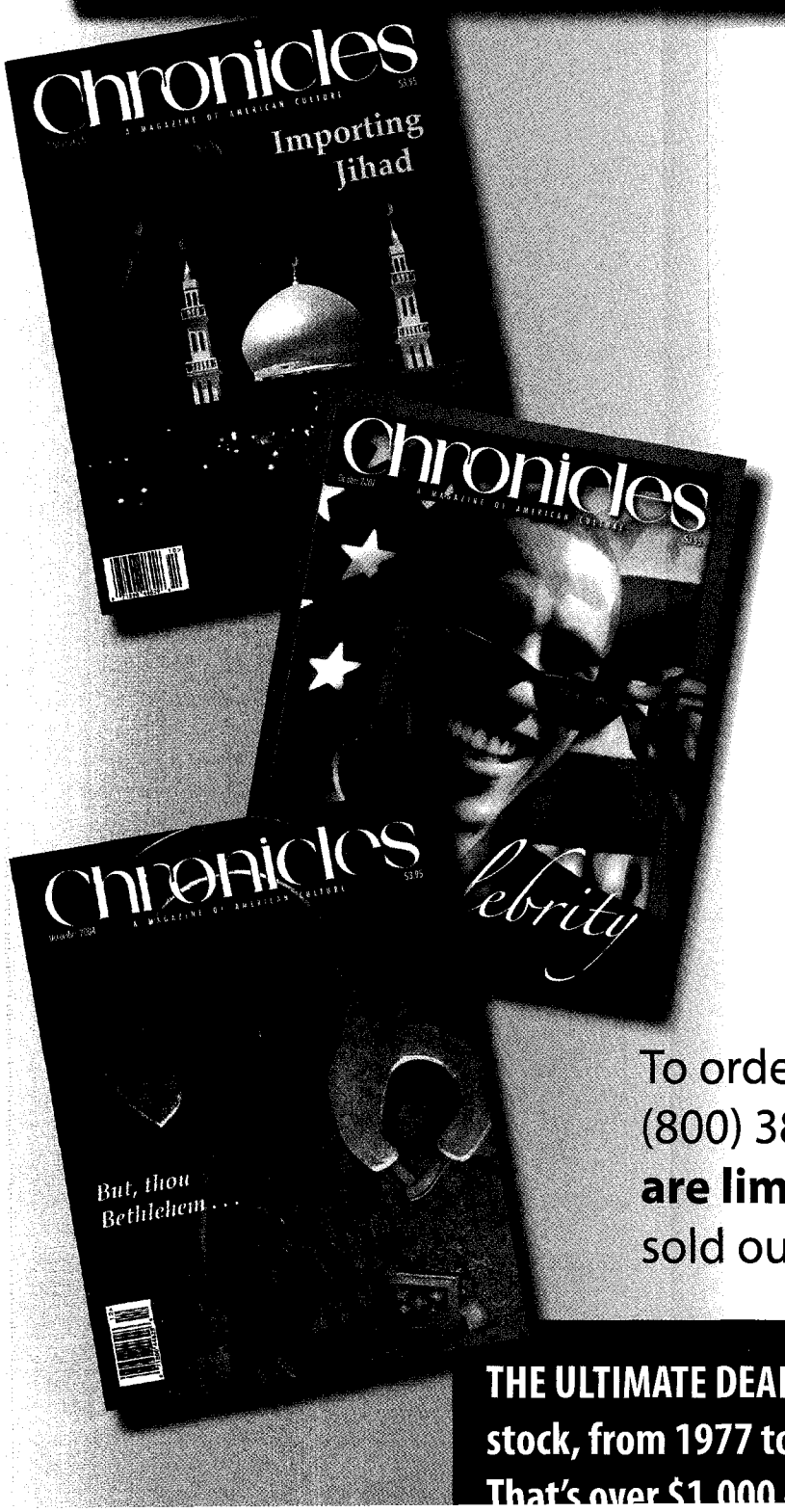

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by Taki Theodoracopulos

Europe's P.C. Fatwa

Sometimes I have to pinch myself to remember that Europe was the cradle of democracy. For today Europe seems to be sliding inexorably into a culture of control that would have made Stalin proud.

Carol Thatcher, the daughter of the great Lady T, was recently banned from the BBC for referring to an unnamed tennis player's hair as "reminding her of a golliwog." Carol said this in a private conversation but was overheard by a snitch who reported her pronto. The BBC fired her on the spot. It was a jokey remark by a nice woman who was punished by the powers that be for being, well, white and the daughter of an ex-prime minister. Five years or so ago I was investigated by Scotland Yard for incitement when I called career black criminals in the United Kingdom sons and grandsons of career criminals. I was let off with a warning that next time it would be curtains.

At least my offense was in print and public. Poor Carol's was a private affair, which means that no offense could be given to the tennis player or the public at large because only two people heard it. Shades of *1984*.

And it gets worse. A British community nurse, Caroline Petrie, offered to pray for an elderly patient who was being treated at home. A fellow nurse reported her, leading to suspension without pay while an inquiry took place. Although the patient had declined the offer, she said she was not the slightest bit offended. It was Caroline Petrie's colleagues—many of them Muslim or black—who were offended by nurse Petrie's transgressing codes of "equality and diversity," which prohibit a helper from offering the Christian solace of prayer.

Such political correctness is now the governing characteristic of most European governments. Ostensibly designed to protect disadvantaged groups, it is all about advertising the moral purity of those who enforce it. The Brussels-based bureaucrooks, who are legislating as if there were no tomorrow, are zealots of a secular inquisition profoundly totalitarian in character. People have to watch their tongues for fear of offending a politically correct public-sector ruling class. Not even Prince Harry, younger son of Prince Charles and third in line to the British throne, is safe. A serving soldier, Harry was heard in a three-year-old video calling a fellow officer a "Paki." The fellow officer did not mind at all, but the busybodies did. Harry was made to apologize and eat humble pie, despite the fact that *Paki* refers to a nationality and not to a faith.

On one hand we have Muslim extremists preaching in mosques all over Europe how Christians and Jews are unclean and pig-like and how the infidel will one day be put to the sword, and on the other we have the crooks and cowards who govern us hiding behind the European Court of Human Rights, which rejects the removal from European shores of anybody to his own country if that country "lacks acceptable standards of justice and freedom." That means most of the world.

Twenty years ago, upon the publication of Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses*, and the ensuing *fatwa* by Ayatollah Khomeini, many politicians and lawyers made brave noises about freedom of speech, but in reality most of our leaders acquiesced and expressed solidarity with those who felt offended. I wrote at the time that I hoped they would kneecap Rushdie for being an opportunist, an ungrateful turd, and a very bad writer to boot. Mind you, Margaret Thatcher, whom the grotesque Rushdie had pilloried nonstop, is the one who came to his rescue, at public expense. Alas, Khomeini's threats and Muslim rioting did the trick. Ever since, any public discourse that might offend has been considered off-limits. After the July 7, 2005, London terrorist attacks, laws were passed closing extremist websites, yet none of them has been enacted. Not a single terrorist website in Britain has been shut down. Political correctness reigns supreme.

Of course, nothing said or written or produced on stage, screen, or television against Christianity or the white race is off limits, especially where the Catholic Church is concerned. Asian communities are permitted to use offensive terms like *Kallu* for blacks, and blacks are allowed to use any word they feel like about whites, but you won't win a free trip to the Bahamas (lucky you) for guessing what race or creed is censored even in private conversations if within earshot of Big Brother.

Every interest group that can organize itself and make aggressive demands or threats to limit speech by white Europeans appears to succeed. European laws are now designed to make it easier for one state to imprison citizens who live and work in another. Bulgaria, for example, claims to have implemented "99 percent of EU regulations." In reality, none of the regulations has been complied with, and Bulgaria is recognized as being totally corrupt, with her police and judiciary being particularly rotten. Yet a Frenchman can be handed over and judged by a Bulgarian court on the say-so of a corrupt Bulgarian official. E.U. enthusiasts—crooks—pretend that variations in the standards of justice between nations within the community do not exist. So, next time you're in Europe, keep your mouth shut, your American passport safe in your deepest pocket, and your ticket home handy. ◈

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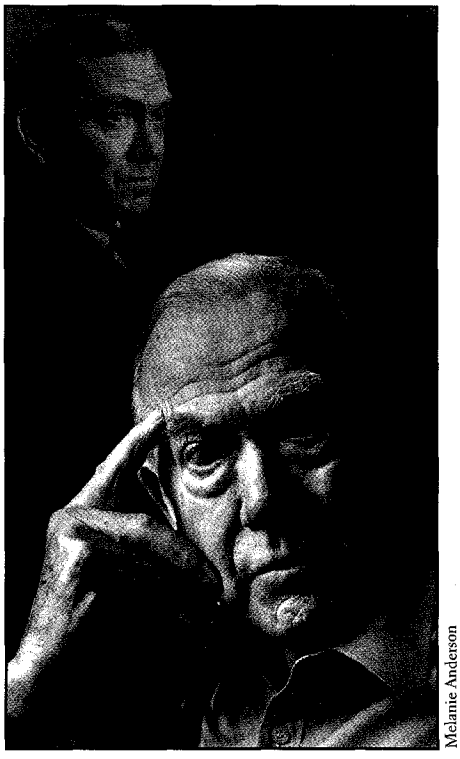
Infelix Culpa?

by George McCartney

"The oldest sins the newest kind of ways . . . "
—William Shakespeare, *Henry IV, Part 2*

Graham Greene: A Life in Letters
Richard Greene, ed.
New York: W.W. Norton & Co.;
480 pp., $35.00

The Life of Graham Greene (3 Vols.)
by Norman Sherry
New York: Viking



Melanie Anderson

Kingsley Amis called him "Grim Grin," an apt name for a novelist who aggressively insisted that the path to God runs through the wilderness of lust, degradation, deceit, and betrayal.

Like his spiritual ancestor, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Graham Greene seems to have been convinced that sin is the gateway to salvation, a position not without some warrant in the theology of his adopted faith. Indeed, it may well be that Greene was drawn to Roman Catholicism precisely because of its Augustinian strain. But this raises an obvious question: How far can one allow oneself to fall before Saint Augustine's *felix culpa* becomes prohibitively *infelix*?

Greene's fiction is filled with characters who declare their sinfulness with varying shades of remorse and pride. In *Brighton Rock*, Rose, an innocent young woman married to a murderous criminal, is "tempted to virtue like a sin" but chooses to stay on her course for what she considers will be damnation for her husband's sake. In *The Power and the Glory*, an alcoholic priest is in the act of saying Mass and has reached the Consecration when a disturbing dream comes back to him unbidden, an unnerving vision of Jesus Christ dancing into an arena "with a bleeding painted face . . . grimacing like a prostitute, smiling and suggestive." (Is there another writer who has portrayed Jesus—even in a dream—behaving like a seductive prostitute?) The priest recalls he had awakened from the dream "with the sense of complete despair that a man might feel finding the only money he possessed was counterfeit." In *The End of the Affair*, a bereft protagonist rages at God for allowing his lover to die:

> You took her away. With your great schemes You ruin our happiness like a harvester ruins a mouse's nest: I hate you, God, I hate You as though You existed. . . . Leave me alone for ever.

And, perhaps most startlingly, in *The Heart of the Matter* the extraordinarily decent and morally circumspect Major Scobie commits what many would think the unpardonable sin of suicide in order to stop hurting the two women he loves.

Despite all this conviction of sin and despair, however, Greene always insists on the possibility of redemption. At the end of *Brighton Rock*, Rose's confessor attempts to console her as she mourns her husband's death believing he's damned for all eternity. We cannot begin to guess, the priest assures her, "the appalling nature of God's mercy." *The Heart of the Matter* provides the best example of this theme. As Major Scobie dies from an overdose of sleeping pills, he speaks an unfinished phrase, "Dear God, I love . . . " The missing word or words, we're left to surmise, may signify God or be the names of his loved ones. Either way, we're clearly meant to recognize Scobie's essential, if unrealized, holiness despite what many would say was his state of damning despair. After his funeral, his wife confides to her priest, Father Rank, that she thinks

George McCartney is film editor for Chronicles.

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Scobie must have been "a bad Catholic." Rank fires back, "That's the silliest phrase in common use." Still she persists in thinking "it's no good even praying" for him since suicides are irredeemable. The priest then lets her have it full force: "For goodness's sake, Mrs. Scobie, don't imagine you—or I—know a thing about God's mercy." In Greene, the sinner is always and maybe most especially in line for God's mercy. While this conforms to Catholic belief, I nevertheless can't help feeling that there's something overwrought about Greene's obsession with the notion of grace lurking mysteriously in the gutters of our existence.

If you've ever wondered about Greene's allegiance to this paradoxical theology, you'll find some answers in *Graham Greene: A Life in Letters*, edited by Richard Greene (no relation), especially if you read the letters along with Norman Sherry's massive three-volume extravaganza, *The Life of Graham Greene*. Together they tell the surprising story of a self-absorbed, often devious man who, like Saint Augustine, wanted to be saved, but not too soon. To be blunt, Greene was afflicted with a life-long infatuation with sin, which, when you think about it, is not an uncommon diagnosis. What made Greene different and what made him a compelling novelist was that he admitted this to himself and very nearly broadcast it to others. His acknowledgment of his sinfulness seems to have been of a piece with his heightened self-awareness and his extraordinary ability to take the measure of his acquaintances, many of whom wound up in his fiction under one guise or another. Only when romantically involved did Greene's acuity fail him. And I don't mean sexual love alone. The evidence suggests that he hadn't much understanding of the women and men for whom he felt the most affection. Most notoriously, he never gave up his attachment to Kim Philby, the talented but treasonous MI-6 intelligence officer for whom he worked during World War II. Greene remained devoted to him even after he defected to Moscow in 1955. In his later years, Greene would display a similar lack of judgment as he succumbed to the charms of revolutionary romance as embodied in some of the world's most homicidally ruthless dictators, including Cuba's Fidel Castro, Nicaragua's Tomás Borge, and Panama's Omar Torrijos. This infatuation with monstrous autocrats is especially surprising in a man who had made it his mission to blow the whistle on political oppression around the world. He had risked his life traveling in Tabasco, Mexico, in 1938 to uncover the murderous reign of terror the Marxist governor Garrido Canabal had unleashed on the province's population, in general, and the Catholic Church, in particular. His reconnoitering became the basis for one of his best novels, *The Power and the Glory*. One can only surmise that old age and disgust with American policies in the Caribbean and Central America had caused Greene to lose his perspective.

Perhaps Greene's worst failure of judgment was occasioned by his involvement with Philby. Greene had worked under Philby in the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS). When he got indications that Philby was a Soviet mole, he resigned rather than share his suspicions with his superiors. After Philby defected to Moscow, Greene continued to correspond with him. At 82 he visited him in Moscow and afterward wrote to tell him how pleased he was that the "strong feeling of . . . our friendship has survived all these years untouched." He even wrote an Introduction to Philby's book, *My Secret War*, in 1968, in which he justified Philby this way: "'He betrayed his country'—yes, perhaps he did, but who among us has not committed treason to something or someone more important than a country?" Greene was clearly echoing E.M. Forster, who had written that "if I had to choose between betraying my country and betraying my friend I hope I should have the guts to betray my country." In one of his interviews with Greene, Sherry pointed out that Philby had betrayed not only his country but his friends, for he had passed to Moscow the names of the men he recruited and trained for SIS knowing that, upon arrival behind the Iron Curtain, they would be caught and shot. This meant that over the years Philby had sent hundreds of agents to their deaths. Sherry tells us that this was the one time Greene lost his temper in his presence. His face went "beet-red" as he shouted, "You don't know him and cannot judge." This seems monstrously obtuse on Greene's part unless, of course, we're willing to give credit to the rumors that Philby was a triple agent and therefore was working on Britain's behalf all the while. But then this would make the British government monstrous. And that couldn't be, could it? Either way, there can be little doubt that Greene's good friend was an ideological thug. Greene himself has been said to have remained in the employ of the SIS after his resignation, reporting back his findings especially while traveling in communist countries. I suppose anything is possible with such a secretive, contradictory fellow. It would explain why he always seemed to be on the scene in the world's various hot spots precisely when they were reaching their flash points: Sierra Leone, Mexico, Haiti, Cuba, Vietnam, to name a few that provided the settings of his novels. It might also explain the dizzying parodies of espionage he wrote in such works as *Our Man in Havana*, in which no one seems to know with any certainty who is on whose side.

Greene's letters to his wife and the second of the five mistresses he entertained during his long life also show him in an unflattering light. They testify to his capacity for betrayal. After having pursued Vivien Dayrell-Browning relentlessly, he converted to Roman Catholicism to make himself presentable enough to marry her in 1927. Then in 1939, just as World War II was about to begin, he sent Vivien and their two children to live out of harm's way in Oxford while he stayed in London writing and serving as a fire marshal. This freed him to conduct the secret affair he had already begun with Dorothy Glover in 1938. His letters to Vivien through this period are painful to read because we know from Sherry how freely he is ly-

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ing to her. In 1943, after Vivien has discovered his affair with Glover, he writes protesting his devotion.

> I love you so much, my darling. You are the best, the most dear person I've ever known. . . . Life is sometimes so beastly that one wishes one were dead, & I go to places like Mexico & Freetown in a half hope that everything will be finished. Sometimes I wish I could twist a ring & skip twenty years & be old with you, with all this ragged business over. I never wanted to be old but with you I could be old & happy.

It's disconcerting to read the author of pointedly unsentimental novels pouring on such gag-inducing treacle. Three years later he moved on from Glover and took up with Catherine Walston, an American married to Harry Walston, a very wealthy aristocrat and landowner. She had written Greene explaining that she was preparing to enter the Catholic Church. Claiming his books had persuaded her to do so, she hoped he might agree to be her godfather at her baptism. Greene agreed with no great enthusiasm and sent his wife to fill in for him at the ceremony. When Catherine instigated a meeting shortly afterward, it didn't take Greene long to decide he wanted to be something more than godfather to this beautiful, vivacious woman. They soon began a ten-year affair that was curious indeed. The evidence strongly suggests that Catherine was one of those women who collects men as a huntress might trophies. While she and Greene were lovers, she maintained her marriage and saw other men on the side, including, it seems, a few besotted priests. She liked to tease men, driving them to distraction and making them jealous. Sherry reports that on one excursion Greene and Catherine made out in the back seat of the car Harry Walston was driving. This sounds quite advanced—some might say exciting. Or was it something else? Women who behave as Catherine perpetually did may seem to be sexually uninhibited, but, as men with any experience know, they're rarely interested in sexual fulfillment as such. They're casting themselves as an enchanting Circe. They play on masculine desire in order to manipulate and control men. It's a game that appeals to prostitutes also. It enables them to think they're preserving their dignity while conducting their sordid profession. It's difficult to believe Greene wasn't aware of this possibility in Catherine's character. He frequented prostitutes throughout his life wherever his far-flung travels took him and must surely have been on to this aspect of feminine psychology. His fawning, sometimes craven letters to Catherine, however, suggest he never considered it. Whatever the truth, it's difficult to understand what Greene could have seen in such an adventuress. It's especially disturbing to read his letters telling her that he is more of a Catholic because of their relationship and urging her to go to confession and receive the Eucharist even though they have no intention to break their relationship. This seems to push the Augustinian position a good deal further than the bishop of Hippo ever intended.

Speaking of Greene's predilection for prostitutes, it's odd that a man whose novels so often dramatized the horrors suffered by the exploited poor in Sierra Leone, Haiti, postwar Vienna, Cuba, and wherever else poverty and oppression reigned should have patronized women in this profession. After all, prostitutes almost invariably come by their trade growing up in desperately impoverished surroundings. That's where they meet the pimps who recruit and exploit them. Yet Greene seems to have been untroubled by these facts. He was so dedicated to their services that he carried with him a notebook in which he listed the ones he frequented in the world's various cities, their pet names, their appearances, their special talents, even their smells. It never seemed to occur to him that he had any complicity with the pimps who were exploiting the wretched women ensnared in this profession. On occasion he went so far as to take his friends, men and women, to brothels and sex shows in Paris and Havana. Was this his idea of daring, worldly sophistication? Greene was decidedly sleazy.

What can we make of all this? That Greene was personally a humbug seems inescapable. Yet he wrote some of the most morally and politically searching novels of the 20th century and put himself at risk by speaking up constantly on behalf of the oppressed around the world. Perhaps we can gain some insight into this man of contradictions from an exchange of letters among himself, Elizabeth Bowen, and V.S. Pritchett addressing the nature of literature. They were designed to be read on the BBC and were later published as *Why Do I Write?* In one letter, Greene argues against state support for writers, citing the Soviet Union as an example of a state that has used its financial support of the arts as justification for stifling writers and much worse. According to Greene, writers must keep clear of state support to preserve their privilege of disloyalty. It is, he elaborates, "a privilege you will never get society to recognize. All the more necessary that we [writers in the West] who can be disloyal with impunity should keep that ideal alive." Then by way of fuller explanation he quotes from John Henry Newman's *The Scope and Nature of University Education*, remarking that Newman had defended writers "skilfully from the attacks of piety (that morbid growth of religion)." Here is the passage Greene quotes:

> [I]f Literature is to be made a study of human nature, you cannot have a Christian Literature. It is a contradiction in terms to attempt a sinless Literature of sinful man. You may gather together something very great and high, something higher than any Literature ever was; and when you have done so, you will find that it is not Literature at all. . . . Proscribe (I do not merely say particular authors, particular works, particular passages) but Secular Literature as such; cut out from your class books all broad manifestations of the

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natural man; and those manifestations are waiting for your pupil's benefit at the very doors of your lecture room in living and breathing substance . . . Today a pupil, tomorrow a member of the great world: today confined to the Lives of the Saints, tomorrow thrown upon Babel . . . You have refused him the masters of human thought, who would in some sense have educated him, because of their incidental corruption . . .

It's telling that Greene embraced Newman's apologia for "Secular Literature." Doing so, he could rationalize his pronounced interest in all that was undomesticated, wicked, sleazy, and treacherous. On principle, he eschewed any temptation to abide by the pieties of either Church or state. He embraced disloyalty because it enabled him to declare *non serviam* to the reigning conventions of his time. Only by means of this resistance, he reasoned, could he ferret out the genuine truth and virtue that might help preserve real individuality in an increasingly collectivized, lockstep age. At the same time, he seems to have applied his aesthetic creed to his personal life, justifying what one can only call his immorality. His repeated portrayals of sinners who are saved by "the appalling strangeness of God's mercy" spoke beyond his fiction to the hope he must have held for himself.

In 1978, Greene replied to a Dublin grandmother who had written to say she had "scruples" when reading his works. Greene told her that when he had met Pope Paul VI, he pointed out that the Holy Office had condemned *The Power and the Glory*. The Pope mildly replied that "parts of all your books will always offend some Catholics and you shouldn't pay any attention to that." Then, addressing the woman's concern about sin in general, Greene assured her that he had "met many priests who admit that in all their years in the confessional they have never even heard a mortal sin confessed." One can understand why Greene would have been heartened by this news. Come to think of it, so am I.

Richard Greene has done a real service in culling these letters from the Greene archives at Georgetown University. Greene fans—and perhaps enemies—will find them invaluable. I liked particularly his wry, understated notes. Of the Irish woman's worries about scruples, he observes: "scruples are, of course, an affliction of the devout, now thought to have been eradicated like polio." Norman Sherry's biography was 27 years in the making. It is immoderate, exorbitant, and sometimes goes simply silly with an academic's longing to be as heroic as his subject. Still, as he did in his biographies of Joseph Conrad, *Conrad's Eastern World* and *Conrad's Western World*, Sherry has retraced the journeys of his subject and hauled in a reservoir of fact and anecdote often very well told. Most will not find it a work to read through continuously, but dipping into it here and there as interest takes one is both profitable and pleasurable. ©

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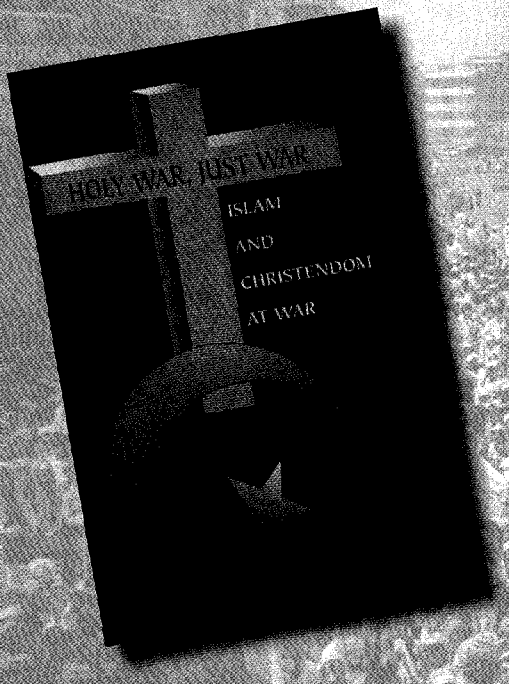

Holy War, Just War

Islam and Christendom at War

by Roberto de Mattei

"The term 'clash of civilizations' is not a palatable one in political and media circles," writes Roberto de Mattei, but it is the only proper framework for understanding how the fundamental theological differences between Christianity and Islam inform the way their adherents wage war. In this important work, he explains these differences with careful scholarship and defends with eloquence the "lawfulness of war against an enemy who is attacking the West, with the aim of establishing a moral and social order that is radically opposed to our history and tradition."

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The Puzzle of France

by Catharine Savage Brosman

Children of the Revolution: The French, 1799-1914
by Robert Gildea
Cambridge: Harvard University Press; 540 pp., $35.00

Robert Gildea, professor of modern history at Oxford, is the author of some half-dozen volumes dealing with France after 1800 or, in one case, Europe as a whole. Most are broad studies or learned surveys (the terms are not intended as pejorative), very detailed, usually concentrating on one or more aspects of the picture. One of these books, *Marianne in Chains*, which concerns life in France under the German occupation, was awarded the Wolfson Prize for history. Gildea's works have appealed to reviewers and readers outside historians' circles; the *New York Times* and the *Boston Globe*, and *The New Yorker* and *The Atlantic*, all had praise for *Marianne in Chains*.

The present study (reprinted from the Penguin edition in Great Britain) displays and draws on Professor Gildea's vast reading in modern French history and incorporates original reflections and assessments. The organization combines chronological and topical principles effectively. General readers need not feel intimidated by the author's erudition, which enables him to present a broad and authoritative view of France over the period in question. While the Introduction assumes considerable knowledge, that characteristic can be seen as an invitation to greater familiarity, like the prologue to a play or the opening chapter of a novel, which one understands much better after knowing the whole.

The words *children* and *revolution* in the title suggest several features of the work. That all of modern France has been, in various ways, the product of the watershed 1789 revolution and subsequent regime changes is not an idiosyncratic thesis, but it is particularly emphasized here. As for *children*, the author's emphasis on the privileges and burdens of inheritance—political, military, social, economic—and the conflicts between succeeding generations allows him to furnish especially good insight into the complex history of France from the consulate up to the Great War. (Some European historians view 1914 as the true conclusion to the 19th century.) The identification of these generations in cultural, political, and social terms is itself a significant matter, to which the author adds his particular understanding. Politics, governments, revolutions, insurrections and riots, wars, administration, commerce, and trade—the chief concerns of many histories—all receive attention here; but the study is directed toward illuminating the characteristics of French society and institutions and, often, the experience of being French.

Thus, without following slavishly the tenets of any school of historiography, the author provides both overviews of pertinent topics, seen as it were from above, and close-up views, at the village or workshop or family level. One can read about Paris *versus* the provinces; education and literacy; the condition of workers; the family; art and literature; publishing; French views of, and relationships with, other nations; the status of the Church; women's condition; the army as an institution; the development of leisure activities and spread of new consumer goods; and the features of various classes, including a nascent proletariat, and the adversarial relationships among classes and groups, including three rival factions of the upper aristocracy (the Legitimists of the *ancien régime*, the Orléanist branch, and the Napoleonic *noblesse d'empire*). Well-chosen statistics and other facts, revealing anecdotes, and apt quotations support and illustrate the writer's assessments. Numerous glossy black-and-white illustrations add interest; they include reproductions of portraits (paintings or photographs), street and crowd scenes, magazine covers, and cartoons. Representative are an anonymous print showing an Auvergnat peasant's family; Gustave Doré's engraving of an old street in Paris before Haussmann's scheme of boulevards was carried out; Edouard Détaille's painting of Paris under siege by the Prussians; a photo of men going to fight on the Marne and the taxis that transported many; a portrait of Charles Péguy, a poet and journalist who died in that battle standing up (literally and figuratively) for the France he viewed as the cradle of Christendom and a torch to the world; and a 1912 photograph of Madeleine Pelletier, a feminist agitator, wearing men's attire, defiant and quite frightening.

Chapter 4, on religion and revolution, may be of special interest to *Chronicles* readers, who may appreciate the following quotation from Chateaubriand (1768-1848). In connection with Islam and what he called "Oriental despotism," Chateaubriand wrote that it was a question of

> which would triumph on earth, a religion that was the enemy of civilization, promoting ignorance, despotism, and slavery, or a religion that had revived the genius of learned antiquity among modern peoples and abolished servitude.

And two other judgments may hold similar appeal. "The masses, sheer numbers, are always stupid; what we need above all is a natural and therefore legitimate aristocracy." So wrote Flaubert, a scion of the upper bourgeoisie, to George Sand. Ernest Renan, who came from a very modest background (indeed, "underprivileged"), added, "Let us cure ourselves of democracy. Civilization began as an aristocratic creation . . . and its preservation is an aristocratic task also."

In short, Professor Gildea's study will be useful both to readers wishing to refresh their acquaintance with modern French history and to those generally unfamiliar with it, who will find laid out before them a broad but lively picture of France. Those better acquainted with the subject who want to find particular data or interpretations can make use of the effective organization of the material as well as the

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Index (to which they may wish to add an entry or so, as I did, while reading).

It is an unpleasant duty to recognize here, lest readers suppose otherwise in view of the author's position and authority, that the expository style of this study is well below par, or at least what par should be. While, with respect to style in the sense of "fine style," one must report that there is none, that is forgivable; scholars are not all gifted with language, and their intellectual contributions do not depend on elegant writing. The exposition here is, however, marked by numerous mechanical failings. To blame are those associated with the book, starting with the Penguin editorial staff (three names are mentioned in the Acknowledgments), one of whom is a copyeditor. To be sure, the author is at the beginning of the project, its originator and the one who is intellectually responsible; but it can be easily imagined that an historian, even one at Oxford, as he becomes tied up in countless details and observations and is nonetheless anxious to continue the thread of his narrative, may forget, as he puts in his verb, that the grammatical subject is singular, not plural, or use *whom* instead of *who* by neglecting his own syntax, or overlook the vexing ambiguity of antecedents for pronouns as his sentences run on, or omit needed commas, which are really useful little things in helping readers make out meaning. Careful rereading usually identifies such errors. Other failings are matters of expression: forgetting (apparently) how the sentence began and thus writing such phrases as "How to form a governing class . . . was no easy matter," "Although nationalist agitation . . . ceased criticizing," and " . . . as some fantasies believed." Since when can a fantasy believe anything? Such solecisms are too frequent. Stylistic flaws lead to readers' distraction, sometimes confusion. The author may be forgiven these shortcomings, and I will always pardon a minor factual error; *à chaque pécheur, miséricorde*. Copyeditors, however, are supposed to read so closely and dispassionately, not to say with such wariness, that they identify errors in grammar, punctuation, and expression before the book hits the street or library. Ultimately, the publishers are responsible for their products; following Penguin, Harvard University Press has given its august imprint to a history marked by elementary expository errors of the sort that I did not tolerate from my students (who often had to rewrite their compositions or thesis chapters).

An unkind assessment is not the point of this review. Professor Gildea's fact-filled study, not overburdened with detail but appropriately learned, provides a very good sense of France in the 19th and early 20th centuries. At $35 and with illustrations and an attractive dust jacket, it is a bargain. It belongs on the shelf of general readers wishing to brush up on their acquaintance with modern French history as far as the Great War and deepen their understanding of the nation's political and cultural inheritance. France is a puzzle, if not quite the "riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma" that Churchill called Russia in 1941. As America's traditional friend and England's traditional enemy, then ally, and now, with Germany, the dominant power in the European Union—and still everyone's charming but rather unpredictable, occasionally arrogant, acquaintance—France, both past and present, needs, for us, all the elucidation she can get.

Catharine Savage Brosman is Chronicles' *poetry editor.*

The Moral Temper

by John M. Vella

"Ethos" and the Oxford Movement: At the Heart of Tractarianism
by James Pereiro
New York: Oxford University Press; 271 pp., $150.00

Fr. James Pereiro's new history of the Victorian Church examines a much-neglected element of the Oxford Movement's central tenets. *Ethos*, he contends, was the key component in the development of a complex theory of knowledge that Tractarians—named after the movement's "Tracts for the Times"—would adopt as their own. The idea was conceived by Anglican priest and poetry professor John Keble, based on his reading of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and Bishop Butler's *Analogy*. It was quickly adopted and further developed by fellow Tractarian leaders Richard Hurrell Froude and John Henry Newman.

In the process of explaining the meaning and significance of *ethos*, Pereiro introduces a figure who he believes has not received enough attention. Samuel Francis Wood, a gifted student of Newman, played an important role in the movement by formulating a theory of doctrinal development that made a significant impact on his former tutor's intellectual trajectory. Along the way, we learn of another neglected aspect of Tractarian history: the activities of laymen, like Wood, who carried on the cause in London while the more famous members continued their work at Oxford.

The movement itself was formed for the purpose of countering the influence of religious liberalism or rationalism within the Church of England. The events that precipitated it were the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts of 1828 and Catholic Emancipation in 1829, followed by the suppression of a number of Irish dioceses in 1833. The rationalizing principles that guided government action betrayed a dangerous spirit of religious indifference and were seen to threaten the Church of England. According to Pereiro, Newman reacted to Wood's theory of doctrinal development by warning him in 1838 of the "dangers of theorizing." Newman recorded in his *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* (1864) how he recoiled years before at seeing the tricolor flag of a French ship during a Mediterranean voyage. His Burkean revulsion toward abstract theorizing would stay with him his entire life. He would admit, for instance,

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that in matters of intellectual debate, "[a]bstract argument is always dangerous." "I prefer to go by facts," he added in *A Grammar of Assent* (1870). Yet through the influence of such men as Wood and Froude, Newman was able to arrive at an understanding of how the Church is to treat revelation over time, without abandoning his own insight into the dangers of intellectual abstractions.

Indeed, the well-documented account of Newman's embrace of the notion of doctrinal development is one of the most notable contributions Pereiro's book makes to Newman studies. While Froude was open to the idea that the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church might have been "a development of the Apostolic ethos," Newman first believed that only error was capable of development. During this same period, Wood was developing his own argument for doctrinal development, which Newman and Henry Edward Manning—future Catholic convert and archbishop of Westminster—opposed at the time, only to reverse course years later. Newman thought that doctrines not found in Scripture and antiquity are traditions of men. Wood argued that the result of Newman's principles would be "not merely to refer us to antiquity but to shut us up in it." The Church must gradually and carefully exercise authority given to Her by "taking the divine word for her guide, and proceeding in the course which is natural to the mind . . . evolve, comment on, and exhibit the whole counsel of God." Deprived of Her ability to develop a greater and more profound understanding of divine revelation, beyond the comprehension of the Fathers and the limited exposition found in Scripture, She would be defenseless against error and powerless to defend orthodox teaching against heresies.

Newman's decision to accept doctrinal development did more than convince him to become a Roman Catholic in 1845. It transformed the theoretical basis of his conservatism. He did, in fact, embrace a vision of Tradition that was more dynamic than static, more capable of responding in creative ways to heterodox teaching. Newman would famously say in his *Development of Christian Doctrine* (1845) that "to live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often." Christian truths do not change, but our understanding of them deepens over time under the protection of the Church guided by the Holy Ghost.

Soon after his conversion, while at the College of Propaganda in Rome, Newman wrote in his diary an assessment of the Jesuit priests he encountered there. Despite the conspiratorial Protestant literature against the Jesuits, Newman found them to be disappointingly lacking in "tact, shrewdness, worldly wisdom, sagacity, all those talents for which they are celebrated in the world." While some were clever, the group as a whole lacked originality and the intelligence needed to "create anything positive for the wants of the times." They appeared to be "plodding, methodical, unromantic," while possessing a "deep suspicion of change." They were unthinking "conservatives" reminiscent of Keble at the time of the Whig Reform Bill of 1831 as well as Froude, "before his eyes were opened to see through the hollowness of the then so called Toryism." Burke once wrote that "a state without the means of some change is without the means of its conservation." By adopting a more Catholic ecclesiology, Newman was able to apply this principle of conservatism to the Church.

Pereiro aptly explains the significance of long-neglected documents and ignored passages in well-known manuscripts. One of these neglected documents is the contemporary history of the Oxford Movement written by Wood at the request of Newman and Edward Pusey, who succeeded Froude upon his death in 1836. Wood's *Revival of Primitive Doctrine* underscores the Tractarians' claim that they were giving a much-needed boost to the Anglican Church, which had lost her vigor and direction. In recent years, this Tractarian claim has been challenged by Peter Nockles, who argued that High Churchmen were much more influential in the early 19th century. However, Pereiro effectively answers Nockles with testimony from both evangelical and High Church commentators of the day who saw the Anglican Church in crisis with no clear relief in sight. Wood's account helps to illustrate the difference between High Churchmanship and the Oxford Movement. Unlike High Churchmen, the Oxford Movement sought to revive a Catholic *ethos* by recovering the doctrine and practice of primitive Christianity. That *ethos* contributed significantly to their epistemology.

Keble followed Aristotle and Butler in arguing that moral goodness plays a central role in forming an accurate understanding of right and wrong. In matters of religion, the moral sense can correct intellectual deficiencies. The Catholic *ethos* was understood to be a moral temper involving openness to God's actions in the soul. This requires a humility of mind and heart rather than the self-sufficiency of rationalism or the righteous confidence of private judgment. Through an openness to God's guidance, the intellect would become receptive to the light of truth, and grace would be sufficiently abundant to make possible the soul's discovery of the proper path. "We have nothing to hope or fear," Newman wrote in 1837, "from Whig or Conservative Governments . . . We must trust our own ethos."

Pereiro's book is the result of extensive archival research and a thorough knowledge of the primary and secondary sources. Brief biographies of more obscure figures are included in footnotes to assist the nonspecialist. The letters of Wood to Newman and Manning on doctrinal development are reprinted in the Appendix together with his history of Tractarianism, all accompanied by Pereiro's helpful notes. Here is a fine work of history by a scholar who treats the past with the care and respect it deserves.

John M. Vella is pursuing a master's degree in history at Villanova University.

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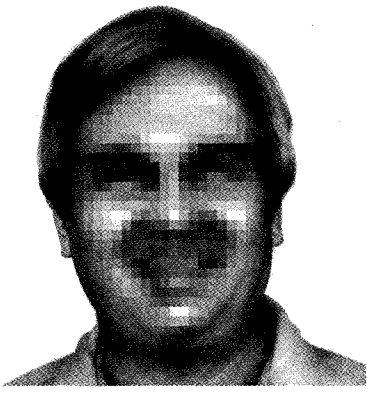
by Joe Ecclesia

Preparing for Battle



Your Excellency:

May is once again upon us, bringing that mad dash in which you sprint from parish to parish, rubbing oily crosses on the smooth foreheads of gawky teens, *confirmandi* mentally and spiritually armed to do battle with the dragons facing God's holy Church. My youngest son, who is even now preparing to receive from you his own dab of chrism oil, recently spent a Wednesday evening with his classmates discussing whether God was more like a sofa or a recliner. (If we're making God a chair, I would opine for a buoyant chaise lounge on the *Titanic.*) Ah, those dragons: We can only pray their teeth are marshmallows, their fiery breath the result of too much hot sauce.

But just suppose, Excellency, that some of those dragons really do want to destroy the Church. How will they go about it?

The *National Catholic Register* reports that the Connecticut state legislature's Judiciary Committee has attempted to enact legislation that would remove control of a parish and its facilities from the priests and bishops. Supported strongly by Voice of the Faithful, that aged group of heretics opposed to Church teachings on female ordination, abortion, and homosexuality, Raised Bill 1098 seeks to give any Catholic church within the state of Connecticut the power to organize its own corporation, found a board, and so bypass diocesan control of the individual parish. Though Connecticut's bishops, priests, and laity have managed thus far to avoid this fate—Hartford Archbishop Henry Mansell denounced the bill from the pulpit, and Bridgeport Bishop William Lori went so far as to call the measure payback for the Church's defense of marriage *vis-à-vis* homosexual assaults—the door has nonetheless been cracked open. We may expect to see similar bills in other states.

(The time is possibly drawing near, Your Excellency, when politicians, encouraged by greed, necessity, and secular indifference, will begin investigating the taxation of churches. Launch a media campaign in which the vast untaxed Church properties are publicly listed, arouse by propaganda the ire and envy of those who pay property taxes, and even the worst of our elected officials could soon persuade many voters, including churchgoers, of the necessity of taxing Church property, a move that might make Henry VIII look like a piker.)

Connecticut homosexuals also keep banging on the doors of the Church. In addition to its call for complete recognition of homosexual "rights," Connecticut State Bill 899 would demand affirmative-action quotas for homosexuals, bisexuals, and the "transgendered." If such a measure becomes law, in Connecticut or elsewhere, the rainbow on the walls of our diocesan offices and classrooms will assume new meaning.

The attack on the Church and on Christianity in general continues on other fronts. Barack Obama attends a racist, nut-house church for years and gets elected president; Sarah Palin suffers vicious smears for belonging to an evangelical church. Openly supportive of abortion, government funds for embryonic stem-cell research, and sexual dalliances of all stripes, Catholic politicians continue to pop into Mass without fear of excommunication. Since we may confidently assume that these politicians take their stand knowing full well they are in opposition to Church teaching, and since they continue to receive Christ in the Eucharist, we may further assume that they are adding sacrilege to their sins, all with the tacit approval of certain bishops and priests. (I wonder, Your Excellency: if the floors of hell are paved with the skulls of bishops, what part of hell is built from the skulls of bad priests?)

When in pursuit of a goal, the political elites in our country have come to accept certain tactics as legitimate: bullying, lies, slander, and intimidation. Yeats' monster is roused and is slouching toward Bethlehem, toward Jerusalem, toward Rome. In this beast's train march many of the hate-filled American media, certain Hollywood entertainers, and a host of secularists of all stripes. Even among ordinary Americans, more and more people are turning their backs on Christianity.

Some in the Catholic Church—good priests, courageous bishops like yourself, and those members of the laity whose spines remain intact—will doubtless stand strong against the blows that may soon rain down on the Church. Yet what of the others—priests, bishops, laity—whose ill-formed spiritual educations has left them ignorant of the tenets of faith? How many of those poor, weak souls will endure the blows of ridicule and harassment?

My son and his friends realize the ridiculousness of the questions put to them during their confirmation class. Yet I suspect that few of those friends are offered any alternative to soft questions and the easy way. Like their parents, many of them will make easy targets, unable to defend what they do not understand.

I have no idea what sort of a chair God might be. But I do see the Church these days as an embattled fortress in need of stouthearted protectors. When the crunch comes, I only hope there will be enough of the faithful left to make a stand.

Vale, bone episcope,

Joe Ecclesia

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by Scott P. Richert

Now He Knows the Rest of the Story

"Hello, Americans. This is Paul Harvey. Stand by for . . . *news*!"

His voice was arguably the most recognized in the history of radio. His broadcasting career lasted over three quarters of a century, from his days as a high-school intern at KVOO in his native Tulsa, Oklahoma, until 2009. Yet few of the scores of millions who listened to him for decades ever heard his real voice. The slight twang and flatness of his broadcast voice were vintage Oklahoma, but in person and in television and radio interviews, Paul Harvey let his high, almost nasal, on-air voice drop down into its normal mellifluous baritone.

Many a later announcer would have given his left hand to come by the deep registers of Harvey's conversational voice naturally, but Harvey was a product of early AM radio, and a broadcast voice in an upper register stood a better chance of cutting through the frequent static. By the time technology cleared up the airwaves, Harvey's peculiar intonation was as much a part of his persona as was his use of his middle name as his last.

Paul Harvey Aurandt was born in Tulsa on September 4, 1918, and he died in Phoenix, Arizona, on February 28 of this year. But most of his life in radio was spent in Chicago, where he moved in June 1944 at the insistence of his wife, Lynne. A St. Louis socialite who was close to three years older than her husband, "Angel" had big dreams for the man who proposed to her on the very day they met. More than one profile of Harvey through the years referred to Angel as his Col. Tom Parker. The closest many of his listeners got to hearing Harvey's off-air voice came on July 19, 2008, his first day back at the microphone after Angel's death that May: "The loneliest days of my loneliest winter are still very much with me. . . . *Paul Harvey News* will not be the same as when he had Angel's 24-hour perspective. I will do my best with what remains, but it will be something less."

Harvey developed most of his catchphrases in his first year or two at WENR, the ABC affiliate in Chicago: "For what it's worth," he would begin the final story of almost every broadcast; "Now here is a *strange*" would precede the day's oddest news; "And now you know . . . the rest of the story." Thirty years after he began using the latter, Harvey debuted *The Rest of the Story* as a separate afternoon broadcast in 1976. The idea, like the decision to take *Paul Harvey News & Comment* national in 1951, was Angel's, and Paul Harvey, Jr., the couple's only child, did most of the research and writing for the broadcasts, which featured little-known or long-forgotten episodes in history.

Harvey's staccato style gave a sense of urgency to his news broadcasts, yet each was exquisitely paced, down to the second. His mixture of commentary with news is said to have inspired a later generation of conservative talk-show hosts; but never having to fumble for words, pause to collect his thoughts, or waste time until a scheduled commercial break meant that Harvey often delivered more of substance in his 15-minute midday broadcast (and sometimes in his 5-minute morning one) than Rush Limbaugh does in a three-hour show.

Some rank-and-file Republicans today are looking to Limbaugh to provide the leadership their party is lacking, but 40 years ago, Paul Harvey had earned the title "The Voice of the Silent Majority." Though generally portrayed in obituaries as a loyal Republican, Harvey always maintained an independent streak that testified to his Oklahoma roots. Most famously, he reversed course on the Vietnam War, of which he had been a staunch supporter. Addressing President Nixon in an open letter on his May 1, 1970, midday broadcast, Harvey declared, "Mr. President, I love you . . . but you're wrong."

Harvey cheered on Pat Buchanan's insurgency against President George H.W. Bush in 1992 and not only supported George Wallace's campaign for president in 1968 but would have accepted the vice-presidential nomination if Wallace hadn't offered it in the end to Gen. Curtis LeMay. (Years later, Harvey gave some unsolicited advice to Gen. Colin Powell, noting that LeMay "said yes to the vice presidency, and disappeared, and was never heard from again.")

In his broadcast tribute to Angel in 2008, Harvey reflected that "The years don't always add wisdom, but they always add perspective." His own journey proved him at least half right. He boosted George W. Bush's war in Iraq; his love for animals took him beyond fundraising for the Humane Society into support for PETA; he adopted a Goldwater-style libertarian stand on abortion; and in the last decade of his life, a longtime flirtation with Seventh-Day Adventism apparently culminated in conversion to this peculiarly American religion.

Yet his idiosyncrasies were as much a part of what made him an American icon as was his ability to connect with everyone from farmers who would stop their tractors in the field at noon to corporate executives who would listen to his broadcast while eating lunch at their desks. Till the end, his voice was heard by 22 million people per week—a number that Rush Limbaugh only briefly approached in 2003. His passing marks the end of an era in radio—and of a certain independent streak in the American character.

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Letter From Spain

by Christie Davies

Antifascists on the March

All over Britain and Ireland, including the unpleasing town where I live, which is run by a left-wing junta, there are memorials to those who fought in the International Brigades on the Red Republican side in the Spanish Civil War (1936-39). Even though there are but a few British and Irish survivors of the battles of that time, their ideological heirs hold rallies at these monuments, linking the civil-war struggles in Spain to modern political questions, usually to the detriment of the United States. They claim to support democracy, which they don't, and they fervently declare themselves to be "antifascists," which means that they hate tradition and conservatives of all kinds and despise religion. Their role in the Spanish Civil War has been romanticized and glorified in books and films, and their version of events accepted by a gullible public throughout Europe and the United States. By contrast, those from Britain and Ireland, mainly Roman Catholics, who went to Spain to fight for the Nationalists against Bolshevism have no memorials and have been forgotten.

In Spain, the socialist government is currently changing all the monuments and street names of the time to fit this version of history. They have even arbitrarily conferred Spanish citizenship on the by-now-distant descendants of those who fled to Latin America when the Republicans lost the war. It is difficult not to laugh when you read that the Cubans among them are queuing up at the Spanish embassy in Havana to get passports that will enable them to escape to Spain, the country their ancestors had tried to turn into a Marxist state.

The resurgent Spanish leftists have been rebuked by Pope Benedict XVI, who in 2007 beatified 498 victims of religious persecution killed by the Reds during the Spanish Civil War; 71 Spanish bishops and many conservative politicians were present at St. Peter's in Rome for the ceremony. It was the largest mass beatification there has ever been. The Holy Father was extending the work of Pope John Paul II, who had beatified many Spanish martyrs; as a Pole, John Paul II knew full well what it was like to be persecuted by communists. During the Spanish Civil War, 13 bishops, 4,184 diocesan priests, 2,365 male religious, and 283 nuns were murdered by the Reds, often after torture and in hideous ways. Even statues of Christ were destroyed by firing squad. Was this part of the heroic, antifascist democratic struggle? In Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, which romanticized the activities of the Republicans and preserved their memory, there is a vivid account of the killing of a priest:

> The priest was standing and those who were left were kneeling in a half circle and they were all praying. . . . They were still praying as they had been, the men all kneeling . . . looking towards the priest and the crucifix he held and the priest praying fast and hard. . . . And I saw the priest scrambling over a bench and those after him were chopping at him with the sickles and reaping hooks. . . . I saw two men chopping into his back with sickles while a third man held the skirt of his robe.

It is no wonder that, when the war ended in 1939, Pope Pius XII sent a telegram to Francisco Franco thanking him for the immense joy that "Spain's Catholic victory" had brought him.

The Spanish Civil War was not an antifascist war; it was a war between two coalitions. On the Republican side was an uneasy alliance of liberals, socialists, separatists, anarcho-syndicalists, Trotskyites, and communists. On the Nationalist side were the army, the Church, the conservatives and traditionalists, the Monarchists, the Carlists, and the Falange. The Falange was fascist, but it was not the dominant element in the coalition, neither during the war nor in the years that followed. When Franco died there was a reasonably smooth transition to a constitutional, democratic monarchy, which had the support of the Church. During the time of Franco, the fascists were dissatisfied because he had not provided the kind of radical social transformation they wanted, and they resented the power of the Church and the army. Spain was never a state based on the rule of a single political party in the way the Soviet Union or Nazi Germany was. When the Falange clashed with Cardinal Segura, the archbishop of Seville, he simply threatened to excommunicate them. Franco himself was condemned by Joseph Goebbels as being a "bigoted churchgoer ruled by his wife's father confessor." By contrast, if the Republicans had won, the communists (as the most ruthless and disciplined faction) would soon have taken control and created a totalitarian state along the lines of the Soviet Union. Franco was very careful to remain neutral during World War II, but during the time of the Nazi-Soviet pact (1939-41), a communist Spain would have obeyed Stalin's orders and helped the French Communist Party undermine France's ability to hold back the Nazi invasion. Before the fall of France, the French communists had, on Soviet orders, carried out a program of sabotage in French factories to undermine the war effort against the Nazis. It is an episode our so-called antifascists prefer to forget. A Spanish communist government would have certainly allowed and helped the Nazis to seize the British naval base in Gibraltar, and the war would have been lost for the West long before Pearl Harbor.

The regime most nearly comparable to that of Franco would be the authori-

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tarian Austrian chancellorships of Engelbert Dollfuss and Kurt Schuschnigg (1932-38). Both lacked our Anglo-American regard for individual freedom, an independent judiciary, and strong constitutional safeguards, but the British and the Americans have been lucky in their history; we have never had to face an internal totalitarian threat as Austria and Spain did. Indeed, Austria was threatened not only by Bolshevism but by the Nazis, who assassinated Dollfuss in 1934. They forced Schuschnigg to quit in 1938 and not only took over Austria but forced her to conform to the ways of German Nazism. Before that, there had been no official antisemitism in "clerical fascist" Austria, nor violent attacks on Jews. There were very few Jews in Spain, though many Catholics were of Jewish descent, probably including Franco himself; the surnames of both his father and his mother (Bahamonde) seem to indicate this. He would not have looked out of place in a Sephardic synagogue. Franco was a strong nationalist but not in any sense an upholder of the kind of bizarre and crackpot racial doctrines of the Nazis. He accepted the Nazis' airplanes, but that was all. During World War II, Spain provided passports for many Jews of Spanish ancestry trapped in Nazi Europe and allowed them to enter Spain. Franco's occasional anti-Jewish comments are often dredged up, but why was no one concerned when current socialist Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero said, in 2005, "*Es que a veces hasta se entiende que haya gente que puede justificar el holocausto*"? ("At times one can understand that there are people who can justify the holocaust.") In the years since he made that comment, the proportion of people in socialist Spain who hold negative views about the Jews has risen sharply from 21 percent to 46 percent (in 2008). Further surveys in Spain have found that half of the population accept the most vicious of antisemitic stereotypes, and half of Spain's high-school students would prefer not to sit next to a Jew in school—again, in a country with a tiny Jewish population. That is what the new "antifascist" Spain is like. Hate the Church, hate the Jews . . .

Life may have been unpleasant and unfree in Franco's Spain (I would have loathed it), but it was vastly better than it would have been under the Bolsheviks. Those who denounce Franco today often do so in class terms, saying that he represented only the landowners, merchants, and industrialists. Even if that were true, an ordinary working man in 1930's Spain still lived better than his counterpart in Leningrad. At least a poor peasant or landless laborer had something to eat, which cannot be said of the peasants in the Ukraine, who were deliberately starved to death in the millions. In the early years of Franco's rule, there were many political prisoners and the use of forced labor, but never the slavery and brutality of Soviet Siberia. It is not that Franco's regime was good, but that the Soviet Union was pure evil, and those who fought in the International Brigades either knew or should have known this.

Russian journalist Ilya Ehrenburg, who was covering the Spanish war (which coincided with the great Soviet purges) for Moscow, was told a joke on a visit home that tells us all we need to know:

> I hear they've taken Teruel.
> *What, and his wife too?*

The town of Teruel in Aragon repeatedly changed hands in 1937 and 1938, and the Soviet press was full of slanted war news about it, but for those who lived in terror that they and even their spouses, children, and relatives might be numbered among the millions arbitrarily arrested and put in a camp or executed, Teruel mattered far less than knowing which of their neighbors had just been taken away.

How, then, should we regard the various fascist, semifascist, quasifascist, imitation fascist, and arbitrarily-designated-as-fascist countries of that time?

There was one world leader who consistently and belligerently opposed both the communists and the Nazis. In 1919, Winston Churchill had wanted to intervene in the civil war that followed the communist overthrow of the constitutional Kerensky regime in Russia and strangle Bolshevism in its cradle. In 1927, Churchill said of Mussolini's fascist Italy,

> If I had been an Italian I am sure I should have whole-heartedly been with you from start to finish in your triumphant struggle against the bestial appetites and passions of Leninism. But in England we have not yet had to face his danger in the same deadly form . . . But that we shall succeed in grappling with Communism and choking the life out of it—of that I am absolutely sure.

Churchill was for the same reason an early and fervent opponent of Hitler and the Nazis. His attitude toward authoritarian regimes was governed by his determination to preserve Western Christian civilization; he did not try to force democratic institutions on countries whose traditions would not support them. His program was simple. *Fight the Bolsheviks. Fight the Nazis. Ally yourself with the devil of Bolshevism to defeat the Nazis. Fight the Bolsheviks again.* It is a good model for how to behave today.

Churchill's only aim regarding Spain during World War II was to keep her neutral. The leftists may have seen the war as an antifascist crusade. No one else did. In May 1944, when the war, in effect, was won, Churchill spoke out; to the enormous anger of the Spanish Republican leftist exiles, he denounced any postwar intervention in Spanish affairs. He declared that Spain's internal problems were for her to solve on her own and added, "It is not for us to meddle." In 1945 Stalin wanted everyone to break off all relations with Spain and to support the "democratic forces" there. Churchill refused to listen, but Spain, nonetheless, was excluded from the United Nations. However, two Soviet satrapies, Ukraine and Belarus (Russian colonies at the time), were given seats in the United Nations, in addition to the one occupied by Moscow.

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The Russians used their Polish stooge in the United Nations to claim that a poor, exhausted Spain with no territorial ambitions was a "threat to world peace" and was secretly manufacturing weapons of mass destruction. In 1946, Churchill declared before Parliament that "There is as much freedom in Spain under General Franco's reactionary regime and a good deal more security and happiness for ordinary folk than in Poland at the present time."

The future Pope John Paul II would have agreed, as would most Poles.

In 1948 Churchill went on to demand the full incorporation of Spain into the Western defense system: "Fancy having an ambassador in Moscow but not in Madrid. The ordinary Spaniard has a much happier and freer life than the individual Russian or Pole or Czechoslovak."

The average Czechoslovak had discovered what happens to a country in which democratic elections bring to power a coalition government with a large communist component, when that component is in charge of internal security and has created an illegal militia. While Spain under Franco gradually became freer and prosperous—and, in 1975, a democracy—the Czechs and Slovaks endured the hell of socialist tyranny until Soviet power itself crumbled. Theirs was the fate that would have befallen a Spain in which the "Republican" coalition ruled, or Chile if Allende had not been deposed by the prescient Pinochet.

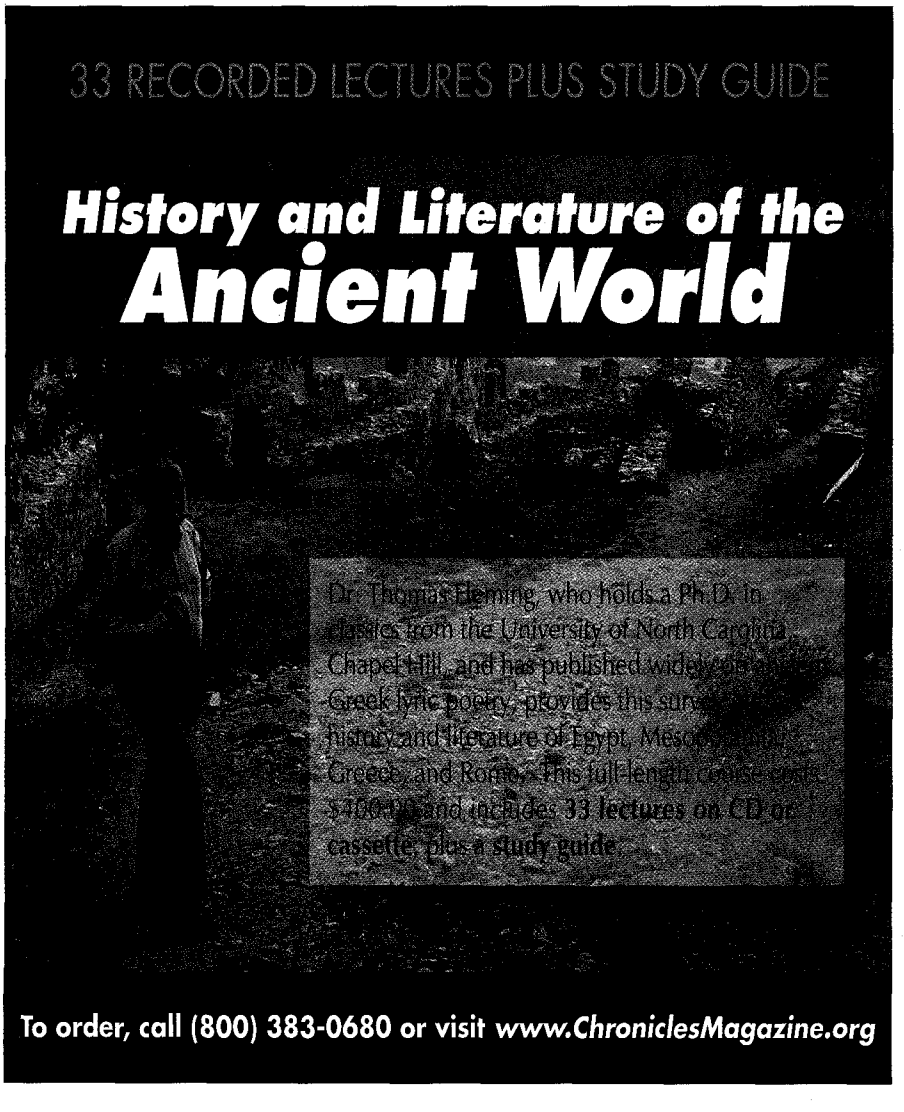
It is for these reasons that we must reject with contempt the hypocritical propaganda of "antifascists," a synonym for left-wing subversives who hate their own country and traditions. Curiously, they embody the very vices of the imagined fascists they claim to be fighting. The antifascists do not believe in freedom of speech or in peaceable political behavior. They have been able to prevent conservatives from speaking by proclaiming "No platform for fascists," causing enough mayhem to force Britain and America's spineless universities to cancel or relocate a meeting. They have no taste for the patient, humdrum politics of democracy and prefer exciting meetings harangued by a radical demagogue, where they can shout hatred. The more fragmented Marxists also enjoy sectarian quarrels over points of ideological detail. There are few things more amusing than their disputes over which left-wing fragment betrayed the others, or which faction was not "progressive" enough during the Spanish Civil War. The sects are too undisciplined to exercise political power; should they ever succeed, the vanguard party of ruthless, disciplined communists would emerge and take over. Lenin called it "democratic centralism."

Neither a fascist nor an antifascist be.

In Spain today, the leftists are creeping back, though the fall of their Soviet sponsor has gravely weakened them. Nonetheless, they are well advanced in their long march through the institutions. In most of an increasingly secular Europe, there is a growing indifference to religion but no animosity to religious institutions or belief. But in Spain, anticlericalism is growing. Many left-wing Spaniards actively hate the Church—though, of course, they are willing to tolerate and subsidize the mosques of Muslims arriving illegally from Morocco.

Spain is now living through a dangerous culture war that looks like a strange rerun of her Civil War. Inch by inch, the leftists are undermining tradition, religion, family, national pride, and everything that once made Spain proudly distinct.

Christie Davies is the author of The Strange Death of Moral Britain *(Transaction). He has recently returned from Spain.*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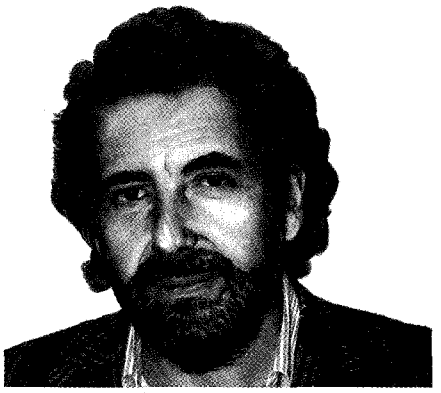
by Andrei Navrozov

The Blind Ape



In the 1970's, one hardly ever heard the word *atheist*. One had the impression that the impassive majority never considered the subject long enough to have made the term a part of their active vocabulary; while the typical exception would proffer, with an upraised finger and a coy smirk, something along the lines of "let's just say that I'm an agnostic." Even to these mainstream exceptions, the word sounded unexciting and irredeemably anachronistic, like a radical feminist describing herself as a diehard suffragette.

Ever since then it has struck me as curious that when a man describes himself as a believer, this invites inquiry and explanation, but when he describes himself as an atheist, all it does is kill conversation: "An atheist, eh? Can you just pass the biscuits, please?" Remarkably, this is quite different from most other popular dichotomies. If a man says, "I admire Stalin," he could easily have interesting things to say on the subject, as could the man who says, "I do not admire Stalin." When it comes to religious belief, however, the contrary position is hopelessly stagnant.

In January, 800 of London's buses became vehicles for a promotional campaign that reads: "There is probably no God. Now stop worrying and enjoy your life." The slogan for the "Atheist Bus Campaign," which features "quotes from famous atheist thinkers," was written by Ariane Sherine, a highly unattractive, though apparently quite slim, young woman of vaguely Asian descent, eerily reminiscent of the bejeaned womanhood of the 1970's. With Freudian slipperiness, Miss Sherine reveals that she became "the creator" of the campaign "after seeing evangelical Christian advertisements on red London buses featuring Bible quotes" and an evangelical website that told her she "was going to spend all eternity in torment in hell, burning in a lake of fire." The ads on the evangelical site were "apocalyptic."

Miss Sherine countered with an article entitled "Atheists—gimme five," suggesting that "all atheists reading it donate £5 to fund a positive, rational counter-advert." Upon reading the article, "Richard Dawkins offered to match the first £5,500 donated." Subsequently, "the British Humanist Association offered to support the campaign," and, instead of the modest sum Miss Sherine had sought, "we ended up raising £141,000—inspiring countries including the United States, Spain and Italy to launch their own atheist bus campaigns."

Professor Dawkins is most aptly described, with regard to overall genetic achievement and capacity for original utterance, as an ape, complete with a *Planet of the Apes* knack for mobilizing the masses. What is striking, however, about an Oxford don's enthusiasm for deploying public conveyances to root out latent apocalyptic fears in the bicentenary year of Darwin's birth is the extent to which the ape is blind.

A glance at the day's news would leave no doubt in the mind of the most pitiless of scientific rationalists that, even if the apocalyptic may not be the spirit of the times, something about the epoch is so badly awry that it quite defeats human reason. "I've always felt exasperated at the idea of hell," preens Miss Sherine, insensate, like her simian mastermind, to the foretaste of it that she is being offered on earth.

"Let there be cold grey light," runs a headline in a newspaper, opened to a random page on a cold winter morning. The ordinary tungsten bulb, Edison's iconic trope for the final triumph of the Enlightenment during the last century, has been made illegal in Europe. It will be replaced with mercury "energy-saving bulbs that give out the same sort of flat, cold light as fluorescent strip lighting." Sellers of conventional bulbs will be prosecuted.

Elsewhere in the newspaper, one notes that, "on Christmas Eve, Hamas legalized crucifixion as a punishment for those who 'weaken the spirit of the people.'" Back in Britain, meanwhile, a vicar has taken down the crucifix in his church with the explanation that it may put off parishioners, "especially children, from attending the services." In some very odd way—a way, moreover, that is integral to the epoch—the two stories are congruent, exhibiting the kind of seamless conjunction one remembers from childhood nightmares. Even though the first is of savagery and the second of meekness, it is as though the giant wings of an apocalyptic beast are overshadowing both, spanning their common absurdity.

The absurdity is rationalism, which the blind ape and his brood suppose is just the philosophical salve the modern world needs, and one they intend to push on the residually religious for as long as their £141,000 will last them. Yet the old, irrational world, whose quaint, unscientific ways they are doing their blasphemous best to uproot, did not prosecute those who would cling to the taper once Edison's lightbulb had become commonplace. And even an avowed rationalist like Stalin—unwittingly, still a part of that old world, if only for having aspired to the priesthood in his youth—would not have openly condoned crucifixion as a means of inflicting torture on those who "weaken the spirit of the people" by disobeying him.

The mercury lamp buzzes faintly, spreading a meager fluorescence over the sheet of newsprint. The hell on earth now dawning for all mankind is a place as supremely rational as a hospital morgue. ◁

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ARMS

How Things Change Out From Under Us

by Paul Craig Roberts

Anyone who has been around for a while and who pays any attention to the news sees many disturbing changes. Recently, I read a report that two children, ages seven and eight, had an altercation at school during recess. They were carted off in handcuffs by the police. The teachers or principal had dealt with the boys' disagreement by calling in the law.

I wonder if the kids now have felonious assault records that will cancel their Second Amendment rights when they come of age.

When I was a kid there were no age limits to the Second Amendment. We all had firearms before we reached puberty. Anyone with the money could purchase a .22 caliber rifle at the local hardware store. If you were too young to see over the counter, the proprietor might call your parents to get an OK. You could purchase .22 caliber ammunition and shotgun shells at most any gas station.

None of us ever shot anyone or any farmer's cow or mule. There were no gun accidents among my armed companions.

My grandmother never batted an eye when I walked out of her farmhouse with my grandfather's shotgun. Guns were just a routine item. We all learned gun safety from the Boy Scouts. My grandmother only became concerned for my safety when I became the proud owner of a spirited horse.

If the attitudes that exist today had been around when I was coming along, my entire generation would be felons. I had my first altercation at the age of three. Bullies were ever present. A kid had to steel himself against them. At six years of age I learned that, Lone Ranger and Roy Rogers bravado notwithstanding, an older and stronger kid was just that. Fortunately, my mother was there to rescue me.

In our neighborhood elementary school, to which we all walked or rode our bikes from kindergarten on, recess was where one's mettle was tested. One of our classmates, Robert, was much bigger than the rest of us and became overbearing.

Generally, our fights were wrestling matches. The first to get a scissors or a headlock on the other party would prevail. But Robert was a boxer, and as he was a head taller and long-armed, he was a problem. One day Herbert had enough of Robert, and a fistfight emerged. It was the first time we saw blood. Herbert was game, but Robert had the reach and the punch, and Herbert got a bloody nose and a busted lip.

The fight lasted a fairly long time, but the playground monitor, Mrs. Humphrey, a pretty young woman who taught the second grade, finally broke it up.

No police were called.

Robert won the fight, but it was the end of his bullying. Herbert, who was about 14 inches shorter, had stood up to him and continued the fight until rescued by Mrs. Humphrey.

Fighting was just normal. It wasn't a police issue. Notes might have gone home to parents to explain the cut lip and bloody nose, but fights were just part of growing up. A person had to learn how to stand up for himself.

Standing up for oneself was a theme of an ad that ran in the magazines of my youth. The ad appeared in the form of a comic strip. There were several versions. The one I remember most was the one in which the 97-pound weakling takes his girl to the beach. The muscular bully kicks sand on the skinny guy, and, when the weakling protests, the bully pushes him down. His girl bemoans his lack of manhood. The weakling orders the ad's product, Charles Atlas's muscle-building program.

Soon the weakling is a different man. He is back on the beach, encounters the bully, and KO's him with a right to the jaw. The girlfriend is overflowing with adoration for "a real man."

Today, this ad would probably bring a lawsuit or an arrest for inciting violence.

Certainly, the bully would be arrested for assault for pushing the weakling to the ground.

The transformed weakling would be arrested for assault for letting the bully have what was coming to him.

When I was in high school, a rich kid, Fate, who worked out with weights and whose father brought in professional boxers to give Fate boxing lessons, decided that he wanted my girlfriend. He spread the word that, after school, he was going to beat me up.

An older and more experienced student with a Napoleonic turn of mind advised me. He explained that I was unlikely to fare well if I worried all day about the event, which would be worse for having a big audience. The trick, he said, was to surprise my antagonist by striking first. Physical-education class would be the opportunity, he said. Fate and I were the quarterbacks of the opposing teams. My mentor said, "Pick the moment and let him have it."

I did.

Fate was the better fighter, but he had relied on intimidation instead of skill, and it had not worked for him. Where there had been confidence, there was now uncertainty. He was unsure of the outcome, and this gave me the edge.

The fight lasted the entire length of the P.E. class. The football coach in charge of the period did nothing. Fate got the worst black eye of his career. Miraculously, I emerged unmarked.

I kept my girlfriend, eventually married her, and fathered two wonderful children with her.

This sounds like bragging, but the point is entirely different. Today, Fate and I would be carted off in handcuffs. We would have assault records. We

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would have no Second Amendment rights, and every time there was an assault in our town the police would pick us up for questioning.

Fate was no worse for his black eye. It probably taught him to escape from hubris. He went on to be a quarterback for the University of Georgia.

I went on to become assistant secretary of the U.S. Treasury.

If the police had been called, they would have just watched the fight.

Today, even pretend fighting can result in expulsion. Not long ago there was a news report of a six-year-old who, playing cowboys and Indians or cops and robbers at recess, pointed his finger at classmates and said, "Bang, bang."

The school determined that the six-year-old was a danger to his classmates.

How times change. We were never without our cowboy cap guns and holsters until we had attained sufficient coordination to be accepted in the neighborhood football and baseball games. In the third or fourth grade I took a .38 caliber Spanish revolver, for which I had traded a World War II helmet, to school for show-and-tell. The teacher asked if it was loaded. "No ma'am," I replied, "this old pistol won't fire, besides, you don't load a gun unless you are on the firing range or on the hunt." "Unless," I added, "you are a soldier at war." I demonstrated that the pistol wasn't loaded by opening the gate and twirling the cylinder, just as Randolph Scott did in the movies.

The teacher wasn't perturbed. It was a tame item, really. The previous week, Buddy Sikes had brought a copperhead to school in his backpack thinking it was a garter snake.

Paul Craig Roberts' syndicated column can be read at ChroniclesMagazine.org.

EDUCATION

A Teacher Complains

by Carey Harrison

November, and my undergraduates' glazed expressions are as good as a calendar. They're limping through to Thanksgiving. So am I, and perhaps my eyes, too, are glazed. I find myself uneasy about teaching, for the first time in a while. In my experience this is the way with teaching: a dozen good classes, one after the other—or, at any rate, classes that pass off without distress—and complacency sets in. You decide you're a jolly-good teacher and that teaching is a pleasant, relatively effortless game. It only takes one disgruntled student to knock you off your perch, much as a single bad review might unsettle an actor. But this isn't what's happened to me. My students have continued to be kind. My malaise is of a more general nature. These students of mine, are they actually students? And if so, in what sense? This is what has come to haunt me. And what am I, if their intrinsic studenthood is in doubt?

They are students, you will say. Of course they are. American students. But in what sense are they actually students, other than in a technical sense? In what way do they resemble the students I grew up with? Come to that, in what sense are they actually Americans, other than in a technical sense, whereby they are inhabitants of a land called America?

This month I asked a class of 33 undergraduates, *students* (if that's the right word) reared in America but of every provenance you could imagine, if they could put a date to the Emancipation Proclamation. Thirty had no knowledge of the Emancipation Proclamation at all, regardless of date. Of the three who professed familiarity, only one got the date right.

My impression, gathered over the past dozen years, has been that, although young Americans appear to know little of history, even their own, the one aspect of it they know is the history of the civil-rights movement. Not very far back, apparently. They all know—and I'm impressed when there is anything at all that took place before their lifetime that they all know—what Rosa Parks accomplished. But many of my undergraduates cannot tell you which century hosted the American Civil War. So what does it mean, what might it mean, to be mindfully an American? To belong, in your soul? To know what on earth it is to which you belong?

Similarly with studenthood. My perturbation began with Eliza, the undergraduate who suddenly took notes in my class. Dear Eliza was doing the very thing a dutiful student might be expected to do, but seeing her do it reminded me forcibly that no one else in my classroom takes notes. Nor have they ever done so. For that matter, no students take notes in any of the classes taught by junior colleagues, which I am bound by law to observe (I believe this is mandated by the state, a faintly alarming thought) and report on. (I mention this because it's a signal relief to know that it's not I alone who am somehow unworthy of note-taking.)

Inspired by Eliza, I began to wonder how I had been able, for so long, to be indifferent to the way my classes go. This is how we proceed: For the most part, I speak to the class about what we have been reading—we were, for instance, discussing Sophocles yesterday evening, in a class devoted to the classics of the ancient world—and my students interrupt, fairly frequently, to pass comment. For as long as I can now remember (not very far, probably not more than 20 years) I've been rather proud of the frequency of student interruptions. Not only does it show they aren't asleep (some of them) but the interruptions are often intelligent, and for a good while now I have fancied myself a master of rhetorical needlepoint—that is to say, proficient at threading these upsurges of student commentary into the weave of my argument, almost regardless of how farfetched they may be. In fact, I have believed—as I now realize—that

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this was my singular art; and, more, that this justified my very existence as a teacher in ways that my understanding of Sophocles very possibly did not. My students would remember, I fondly imagined, the generous creativity of my Socratic proceedings, even if they recalled not a single thing I ever said about the Greeks, or Shakespeare, or Faulkner, or Gertrude Stein, or any of the authors about whom I harbor proprietary feelings.

This fatuous crutch, keeping me upright all these years, snapped like a rotten branch as I began to reflect on what I felt about Eliza's note-taking—and the absence of note-taking by everyone else. I knew, of course, that my students were in class not to accumulate knowledge but to acquire three credits in the board game that is their progress to graduation; I had also prided myself on asking them to write assignments that expressed their own capacity for insight rather than ones that parroted my own. But was this not precisely my mistake? Why take notes if you never have to consult them again? Since I'm not yet ready to fall back on the view that little of what I have to say about Sophocles is worth writing down anyway, I took stock and came up with some radical measures in last night's class on his *Antigone*.

I asked the students to take out paper and write down whatever it was that I said about Sophoclean drama, in general, and the *Antigone*, in particular, that they felt might be useful—I did not say memorable—when it came to the assignment I intended to give, one that would require some general thought about Sophocles and his plays. Out came the pieces of paper. In I dove, reminding the class of the Sophoclean contribution to the evolution of drama, not only in ancient Athens, but in ways reflected in *Hamlet* and *King Lear* and in all subsequent dramatic literature. Eloquently (I thought) I spoke of Sophocles and his understanding of how irony was the great underpinning, not only of a play like *Oedipus Tyrannus*, but of the unfolding of dramatic narrative itself; I spoke of how to think of theater as a genre was to think of Sophocles. I also provided shortcuts to many of the references made by the chorus of elderly Thebans in the *Antigone*—matters, I felt, of useful fact that would save the students Google-time. Gradually, I realized that almost no one was actually writing anything down or had written anything down.

Reader, it may seem impenetrably foolish to you, but I am still too abashed to ask my classes why they don't take notes even when asked to. In part this is simply cowardice—I shrink from bullying them into doing something that to them clearly seems as absurd as if I'd asked them to untie and retie their shoelaces, continuously, during the class; but I also hesitate because I believe I know why they don't take notes. They don't understand their assignments as having to do with the arguments (much less with the wisdom, if there be such) dispensed by a professor. Material for their assignments is garnered online, not from notes taken in class; and were a professor to complain that an argument made by a student failed to square with the professor's own views, this would inspire only mockery. *Aren't students in college to think for themselves?* we would be asked.

The fact that I have myself written more plays than Sophocles, whose 123 tragedies identify him as the most prolific of the great masters of the genre, is of little or no interest to my students. (If reminded of this, they would correctly point out that my plays do not compare in quality with the seven surviving works of Sophocles, and will almost certainly not compare in longevity.) The fact that I have directed a great many plays and thought long and hard, as a practitioner as well as a teacher for the past 40 years, about what it is that grounds dramatic art—this is of just as little interest. If I am a friendly, reasonably well-informed old buffer, I imagine I perform to the maximum of their perceived needs. I am, in other words, a species of babysitter who, from time to time, burbles on benignly about Sophocles (or somebody).

Today, as I write this in the wake of my failed experiment in inciting note-taking, I feel bereft. I shall recover. But I'm also suddenly aware, as I wasn't before (how on earth not?) that my student interpolations in class are always comments, never questions. That is to say, my long experience in the particular field we are (notionally) studying does not seem to them to be a resource. They might as well be in a classroom led—as is frequently the case, I must admit, in classrooms all around me—by teachers who have only the sketchiest knowledge of the subject at hand. They do not ask—indeed, they would not dream of asking—what I think is the solution to the notorious "double burial" problem in the *Antigone*, whereby the heroine's brother is reported to have been buried partially, against the Theban leader's edict, and, subsequent to this report, is yet again reported to have been subject to a further partial burial, with Antigone herself as the criminal. Who did the first burial? Many are the scholarly views on the matter. But my students, if they are concerned about it at all, will raise a hand to utter their firm and unchallengeable opinion. To their credit—or thanks to my determinedly foolish desire forever to interweave their arguments into the fabric of what I have been pleased to call a class—their opinions usually seem interesting and intelligent to me. They are not especially well informed, and if I take occasion to upgrade their information bank, they take my suggestions in good part; I think it reassures them that their teacher is a person who has put in the requisite time to become worthy of being their teacher. But their idea of a good class—much as in America's high schools, to judge from what my wife tells me—is one in which they get to speak, rather than one in which they are instructed.

Is this as bizarre as it seems to me, in my newly awakened, or perhaps reawakened, state?

Just as they never ask questions, my students do not ever look up words they don't understand, in texts set for them to read as homework, or investigate propositions that seem obscure to them. They simply balk at this and move on. Never have we lived in a world in which information is so read-

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ily to hand; indeed the difference between the readiness-to-hand of Google or *ask.com* would leave earlier generations speechless, mindful of their own (my own, indeed) toiling journeys to libraries where the book they needed might be missing or already borrowed or simply not owned by the library in question. And what is the upshot of this miraculous availability of answers to so many vexing questions? The upshot is that students don't inquire. They don't inquire within, or without. The facts, ma'am, are in lockup, they are safely stored online, so why rush to ascertain them?

Of course, my students are compendiously knowledgeable, encyclopedic even, about popular culture: sports; music; TV and film; celebrity. This they do not leave to the internet. They carry the knowledge around with them, in their heads. But interest in exotic facts seems to have withered on the vine. Bored as I was by the classes I took during my education, I was fascinated, as I've imagined young people always will be, by secret knowledge. During French and German boarding-school classes, I studied, under the desk, a primer on Egyptian hieroglyphics I had come across. I loved hieroglyphics because they were mine—mine in a way that neither German nor French nor knowledge of the music Hit Parade would ever be. Do my students have their own world of hieroglyphics? I'm not convinced. At the age of 14, my son was more expert in the history and individual specifications of World War II warplanes than the military correspondents of the major English newspapers, whose errors he would upbraid in short, pungent letters to the editor. It isn't that he was a child genius; he was simply a kid besotted with a private world to be hunted down—it would have been no fun if the facts had been available, in his day, on some equivalent of the world-wide web—and free enough with time and a burgeoning brain to exceed what many professionals had more laboriously acquired. For my part, armed with hieroglyphics, I wound up wanting to be an Egyptologist; but the dreadful, dreary quality of mid-century Oxbridge archeological studies put me off this ambition, I'm rather happy to say, since I have loved walking in Sophocles' sandals for a lifetime. Unsurprisingly, my son wound up wanting to be a pilot; when he was still a teenager I induced a pilot friend to take us up in his single-engine plane, but the outcome was disastrous: The boy was violently airsick and never looked with passion at an airplane again. I had meant well—but I confess I was also a little relieved, since I dreaded the dangers he might incur as a warplane pilot. Instead, he has become a fearsomely gifted mountaineer, and I'm even more frightened for his daily well-being than if he'd been a pilot. Oh, for our best-laid plans!

Sophocles would have understood.

Novelist and playwright Carey Harrison is a professor of English at Brooklyn College of the City University of New York.

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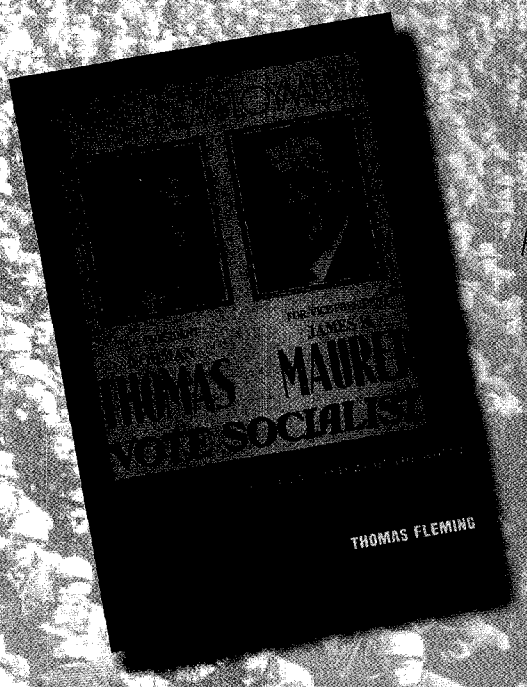

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by Thomas Fleming

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SOCI

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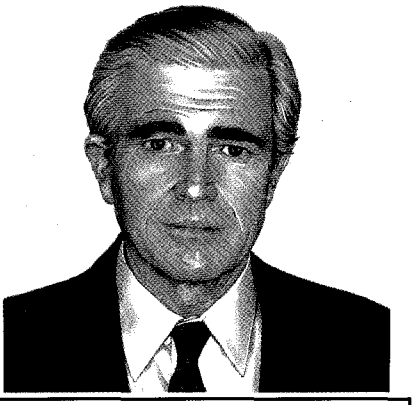
by George McCartney

The Ponderous and the Fleet



Watchmen
Produced and distributed by Warner Bros. and Paramount Pictures
Directed by Zack Snyder
Screenplay by David Hayter and Alex Tse

Duplicity
Produced and distributed by Universal Pictures
Directed and written by Tony Gilroy

The title of Alan Moore's 1986 comic-book series *Watchmen* alludes to the Roman satirist Juvenal, who asked, "Who watches the watchmen?" He was cynically warning that there was no way to control an inconstant wife since she would easily beguile any guard put in charge of her. Juvenal's question has often been invoked in purely political discussions ever since. How does a society protect itself against its supposed protectors? In the aftermath of the Bush administration's expansion of executive powers following September 11, the query's contemporary relevance is quite patent. But as I watched Zack Snyder's adaptation of Moore's comic book, it occurred to me that the question might be leveled with yet a different purpose. Just who is watching this film? And how is it affecting them?

At the theater I attended, the meager audience comprised mostly adolescent boys—the film's demographic, as the marketers say. They were watching a ponderous curriculum that included a paranoid history lesson, a quasi-medical demonstration of the body's various breaking points, and a graphic disquisition on sexuality complete with demonstrations of foreplay and intercourse. In short, *Watchmen* is a $150 million educational film as serious and solemn as such productions come, only with higher production values.

Its history lesson willfully alters known facts but only to get at essential truths. It's 1985. America won the Vietnam War in 1975 with the assistance of Dr. Manhattan, a blue radioactive superman, along with a league of other more or less normal superheroes. As you might imagine, the Soviet Union has been neutralized in the bargain. The Russian leaders quake at the thought of Dr. Manhattan, who can bend matter to his will. They're understandably reluctant to get bent. And, did I mention, Richard Nixon is in his fifth term, scornful as ever of the traitorous East Coast Harvard Establishment?

Nixon's still that paranoid chucklehead. He can't help himself. With the war over, he's forbidden his superhero allies their usual fascist fun: no more suiting up to kick scoundrels in the cause of truth, justice, and the American way. Odd. You'd think Nixon of all people would have continued to support the superheroes' extralegal civic-mindedness. Weren't such shenanigans his stock-in-trade? Most of the superheroes have submitted to the new dispensation, going quietly to seed until one of their number, the nihilistic Comedian, is tossed to his death from his high-rise apartment. Enter Rorschach in fedora, trench coat, and a white cotton mask on which black-ink shapes are forever shifting in homage to his name. This hero is more paranoid than Nixon. He decides there's a plot afoot to bump off all his cronies, and it must be stopped. Meanwhile, Ozymandias, a superhero-*cum*-businessman with a fixation on Alexander the Great, scolds the titans of the automotive and oil industries in his Park Avenue redoubt. "Your oil is a drug, and you are the pushers," he coolly informs them as he proposes an alternative energy system of his own to be given away. Lee Iacocca protests. "*Free* is just another word for socialism." Good old Lee. Too bad he has to take a bullet in the forehead in this alternate history lesson, but, as Ozymandias almost says, saving the world's not for sissies. Moore's outlook is decidedly Stalinist. And like Uncle Joe, he's not at all shy about it. To make the utopian omelette, it's necessary to break a few eggs. Quite a few, as it turns out in Moore's story, and as it did in more conventional history.

Moore's alternate history creates a scenario dear to left-wing sensibilities. How satisfying to have Nixon still around! Fictively speaking, his continuing presence cuts through the ambiguities of the recent past, including Ronald Reagan's inconvenient triumph over communism, and reveals a terrifying truth. America is a fascist state run by a power-mad elite. This justifies everyone's suspicions, gives substance to every grievance. It doesn't get better than this.

Faithfully rendering Moore's lurid imaginings, Snyder has also retained the comic's mood of adolescent petulance. The world of *Watchmen* is being ruined by uncool adults, and the kids shouldn't stand for it. Adult-in-chief is Nixon, party pooper extraordinaire. His squelching of superhero antics may seem paradoxical, but it's really just a manifestation of his middle-class obsession with square ordinariness. He's intent on squeezing every ounce of hipster fun out of life, leaving the world a dank and crummy place, its inhabitants teetering between resignation to dowdy conformity, on one hand, and indulgence in furtive, unseemly pleasures, on the other. Take Dan Dreiberg, a.k.a. Nite Owl, the superhero obviously modeled on Batman. Nite Owl has permanent-

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ly parked his owl-visaged hovercraft beneath his Manhattan brownstone, hung up his cape, and acquired a gut of spreading proportions. Meanwhile, just a few blocks from his home, porno theaters thrive under garish neon; prostitutes accost pedestrians, offering the promise of easy thrills; and criminals brazenly rob and beat the citizenry. As Rorschach says in his neo-*noir* growl, New York City "stinks of fornication and bad consciences." Yikes!

But let's not overlook Snyder's lesson in physiology. When Nite Owl and his girlfriend, Silk Spectre, are cornered by murderous street thugs, they take on the bad guys with cool aplomb. They grab the knife-wielders' arms, breaking them in two. Splintering bones rip through muscle and flesh, their gleaming white tubes oozing purple marrow. Great fun. In another scene, Rorschach, temporarily imprisoned for his vigilante behavior—he peremptorily introduced a child murderer's skull to a meat cleaver—traps a fellow inmate's arms in his cell's bars. Then, to get at Rorschach, another inmate power-saws through the entangled arms in living color. This is not to be missed by kids hankering to perform emergency-room amputations. I also liked the scenes in which dogs tear apart the remains of the aforementioned girl. Not much left for the hospital, but quite illustrative nevertheless.

And then there's the sex ed. The usually impotent Dreiberg finds superhero activity better than Viagra. After a mission, he's suddenly in the mood. He and Silk Spectre strip their latex costumes and enjoy languorous sex in their hovercraft floating over Manhattan. Very educational indeed.

Despite a few ironic moments, *Watchmen* is too self-important to laugh at itself. The tone is high Dostoyevskian with Nietzschean accents. Unfortunately, the material is comic-book kitsch.

So, who's watching the *Watchmen*? Our children, I'm afraid. I wonder what they will take from its lessons.

Writer-director Tony Gilroy's *Duplicity* offers a nimble adult alternative to Snyder's flat-footed schoolboy lessons. The film is perhaps the most amusing, intelligent romantic-espionage-thriller-mystery-comedy to be released in more than a decade. It has the additional recommendation of providing potent relief for the headache corporate America has recently visited upon us. And this, despite its principal actors, Clive Owen and Julia Roberts, neither of whom possesses the kind of light touch usually required by such material. Gilroy has fashioned a glib, time-shuffling script with pacing and dialogue so nearly foolproof that even the dour, sneering Owen and the strained, impetuously toothy Roberts are unable to sink the movie. In fact, Gilroy, who directed 2007's masterful *Michael Clayton*, plays on their liabilities to add an extra comic dimension to the film. Owen's natural glower makes him the perfect foil for Roberts' manic need to one-up him. In the film's elaborate commercial espionage plot, he's always a step or two behind her machinations and finally descends into a state of perpetual guardedness in her presence—quite proper for a man who distrusts the woman he loves.

In secondary roles, the always welcome Tom Wilkinson and Paul Giamatti play pharmaceutical CEOs locked in mortal combat, and they make the film positively hum with a heartening malice.

The story begins with Roberts and Owen meeting cutely in Dubai. She's with the CIA, and he's formerly of MI6, now freelance. He tries a variation on the don't-we-know-each-other gambit, and she counters, "Are you drunk?" As it turns out, each has something the other wants. Roberts has her body; Owen, some secret intelligence. Soon, they're in his room, where the usual happens discreetly off-camera. For Roberts, however, it's not love at first bedding. She calmly drugs Owen and walks off with his intelligence both literally and figuratively: the two oldest professions in dazzling action. For the next five years, Owen plies his trade round the world but stays ever on the alert, hoping he might one day see this mystery woman again. Then, on a sunny day in Manhattan, he spies her in Grand Central Station, and the chase is on. Or so it seems. This is a movie about appearances that have only a glancing relation to reality. Not until the end do we see just how glancing. The mystery is abetted by the film's constant time-shuttling. Cleverly unhelpful directions announce "Five years later," "Two years earlier," "18 months before," and, most piquantly, "12 hours later." This temporal gamesmanship is one of the film's many delights. Another is the titanic battle between two pharmaceutical CEOs over who will cash in on the next stupendous breakthrough in their industry's personal-appearance sector. Appearances again. Tighten your focus. Or maybe not. In this film, the closer you look, the less you see.

Wilkinson and Giamatti make their first appearances at an airport, not at all cutely. Their corporate jets sit outside a hangar, their nose cones pointing menacingly at each other. Each stands alongside his respective jet with his entourage of polished yes-men. The CEOs regard each other balefully and then march toward each other at an accelerating pace. The sequence is silent, but we can tell from their twisting mouths and thrusting gestures that they're spewing vitriolic insults. Once in reach, they begin to grapple old-manfully. The episode is executed with all the panache of an inspired Laurel and Hardy routine. The silliness of the paunchy, lumbering executives, the consternation of their hired help, the gleaming white planes paying mute witness to the human cargo they've just disgorged—it's all a joy to behold. These are the arrogant, pampered beneficiaries of hundred-million-dollar bonuses, and nothing could be more satisfying than to watch them roll around on the tarmac biting each other's calves.

The battling corporate chieftains unwittingly bring Roberts and Owen together again. They are now scheming corporate spies, and they know an opportunity when they see one, and . . . But that's as far as I'm going. It would be treasonous to divulge more.

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by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

Return to Rome

Paul Theroux laments that the world is aging badly, that the world he knew as a young man has nearly vanished, that the decline and decay of precious things is everywhere apparent. Theroux should know; he travels more than I do. Also my own ventures at home and abroad depressingly confirm his impressions. Except when Rome is my destination.

I have been visiting the Eternal City for only about a decade, a ridiculously short period in the life span even of such ephemeral places as Las Vegas and Los Angeles. Still, history, and with it change, are greatly accelerated in the contemporary world. And Rome is the city I never hesitate to return to, expecting to find some monumental building or bridge knocked down and replaced by a modern mediocrity, a neighborhood or park bulldozed and replaced by high-rise apartments and asphalt. And so, every year or two for the past ten years, I've gone gliding down through a pastel Renaissance sky toward an early morning landing at Fiumicino, admiring the blue Tyrrhenean Sea smoothly foaming along the narrow beaches beyond the damp, green fields and dark forests of umbrella pine surrounding the terra-cotta farmhouses and villages as they slip beneath the wings of the plane, holding my Italian grammar open in my lap and anticipating the moment when, presenting my passport to Immigration, I catch the terse official's eye and ask him, "*Come sta, Signore*?" with what I hope is the confidence of an Italian citizen arriving home. The return to a much-loved place is always a triumphal event, and so the ride on the *autostrada* across the hilly green plain and into the city is triumphal, too, never mind the light chatter with the driver regarding the recent weather in Rome and certain unfamiliar or half-forgotten things spied from the taxi before the entry into the city proper: the long climb up and around the north end of the Janiculum where the morning sun slants in beneath the soaring umbrella pines, the first glimpse of the Dome of St. Peter seeming to float untethered in the moistly yellow light that clings softly about the Seven Hills, the descent to the Vatican and the curving Bernini colonnades, and the Victor Emmanuel II bridge over the Tiber from Castel Sant'Angelo to the Campo dei Fiori. There is no more tragic thing than to return to a home that no longer looks or feels like home, but Rome always seems to me more like home than when I saw her last. That, of course, is because I have been around for 61 years, and the city of Rome is 2,700 years old.

Of course, it's absurd to claim that Rome, which consists of historical layers comparable to so many geological strata, has escaped the ravages of time and mortality. The Eternal City is at once a monument to time's hurrying wings and a forced impression of it, preserved in marble, stone, brick, plaster, canvas, wood, and paint. The lesson of Rome is not that worldly things, including man's finest work, do not alter, decay, but that the result of historical processes need not be the ruin, tawdriness, vulgarity, and ephemerality of the modern world. Last year my wife and I put up at the Istituto San Tommaso di Villanova, a charming hotel for pilgrims run by an order of French sisters, in Parioli. Parioli is an upper-middle-class residential neighborhood roughly north of the Villa Borghese. Far from being a part of the old city, it was developed in the late-19th and early-20th centuries from what was then farmland: pastures, vineyards, orchards, *oliveti*. Parioli, in its day, was, as much as Queens, New York, another raw new suburb, erected on the plowed and salted furrows of violated nature. But Parioli today looks charmingly historic, reminiscent architecturally of comparable neighborhoods of Paris: long rows of buff-faced buildings fronted by French windows opening on iron balconies, surmounted by ateliers and impressively mansarded. The Istituto, at Viale Romania 7, is a hundred yards from Piazza Ungheria, and another several hundred down Viale Rossini to the Bioparco, or Zoo di Roma, tucked into the Villa Borghese and bounded by Via Ulisse and Via Aldrovandi.

Foreign travel is always a question of whether to explore somewhere new or revisit some familiar place for the purpose of becoming better acquainted. An argument in favor of the second choice is the special pleasure of making and maintaining friends abroad. Most of the friends and acquaintances we have acquired in Rome over the years are priests and Catholic journalists based at the Vatican. A special one, deceased more than a year ago now, was our dearest Bellamy, an Asiatic lion born at London Zoo and acquired in 2001 by the Zoo di Roma, where he lived out his too-short life (he was only 14 when he died in November 2007 of a highly aggressive malignancy) in the company of his serial mates and their offspring. I last saw Bellamy ten months before his death, when I visited him and his current lioness, Asha, several times in the course of two weeks. But I did not learn of his demise until the following May, when I read the sad news on the Bioparco's website and wrote to the director of the zoo's Scientific Sector, Massimiliano Di Giovanni, to express my condolences and inquire about the most convenient way to make a donation to the Foundation *in memoria*

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di Bellami. The result was a spate of e-mails between Rome and Laramie, one of which extended Signor Di Giovanni's generous invitation to present ourselves *senza indugio* at his office when we next visited the zoo for a personal introduction to Oles and Jad, the new six-year-old Asiatic lion couple who replaced Asha and Bellamy as the zoo's breeding pair.

The zoo community, as I have learned from working as a guide at Denver Zoo, is a fraternal one. Even so, Massimiliano Di Giovanni outdid himself as a generous and gracious host. A tall, lean, bearded fifth-generation Roman, in whom motion and speech are fused as pure energy, he speaks excellent English, allowing me to concentrate on matters pertaining to *Panthera leo persica* rather than my limited Italian. Though he was busy with meetings that afternoon, Massimiliano set work aside to hasten us out the back door of the administration building onto zoo grounds, past the lemurs and the Asian elephants, and over to the spacious yard where the lions are housed.

This is a spacious habitat exhibit, modeled perhaps on the Forest of Gir in northeastern India where the last 350-odd Asian lions still extant in the wild live and including semitropical shade cover in which the lions can almost lose themselves at one end, a waterfall at the other, and at the rear a series of rock ledges rising to a cliff where I had last seen Bellamy vanish like a shaggy ghost through a camouflaged guillotine door in search of his dinner. After his death, there were the expectable comments in the press and on the web about the "*povero prigioniero*," soon to be succeeded by other *poveri prigionieri* in his place. In fact, anyone who knows anything about the perilous life of lions in the wild, and the adaptability of lions to human company and human surroundings, is likely to entertain different views concerning the morality of keeping lions captive in luxurious conditions. I was mourning the absence of old friends gone (Asha was transferred following her mate's death to Cheshire Zoo in England) when a beautiful young lioness emerged unexpectedly from cover and posed for us on the open grass, as if inviting admiration. Oles, despite the cool November weather, was lying up in the shade of the semitropical forest with his great head resting on his paws. Asian lions are smaller than their African cousins, shorter coupled with a double fold of skin along their bellies, and the male's ears stand up ahead of his mane. Unlike many Africans, they tend to that gentleness, even sweetness, of expression I had so loved in Bellamy. Massimiliano unlocked the gate and took us round back to the indoor stalls where he introduced us to one of the keepers, a pretty young woman who also spoke good English and kindly showed us a photo Cheshire had sent of Asha and her latest litter. While we were talking, an elderly tiger in retirement came over to her for what zoo people call a safe rub through the wire. Afterward, Massimiliano bought us coffees at an outdoor pavilion, and Maureen and I crossed the Villa Borghese on foot and walked on through the Porta Pinciana to Harry's Bar at the head of Via Veneto where we ordered Bellinis, a cocktail invented in Venice by Ernest Hemingway and concocted of champagne and peach juice. I did not find the Bellini to be among his greatest artistic creations.

Dining out in a foreign city that is also a familiar one is another great pleasure of international travel. There are restaurants scattered all over Rome, most of them inexpensive neighborhood places, where we are recognized instantly by the staff, who address me in Italian and seem unaffectedly pleased to see us again. Usually they assume, from my blue eyes, cherubic 18th-century visage, and tweed suits, that we are an English couple, though Maureen is one-quarter Italian and could easily pass for full if only she would learn to speak the language. Among our favorites is the maître d' at Ristorante da Olimpio, off Via del Tritone, who treats us to drinks and desserts and relaxes by our table after the lunch crowd has mostly cleared out. On this trip, we were shocked, though, to discover that Il Ristorante The Meeting on Viale Rossini, which was frequented by British diplomats and businessmen as well as by my brother-in-law Roger McCaffrey, had been replaced by Taverna Rossini, an excellent fish restaurant under the same ownership. The maître d' was said to be the same man we had known, but if so, he was not on premises the evening we dined there. He had always been very kind to us on previous visits.

For the first time in Italy, I felt comfortable and secure with the Italian language. In order to prevent my mind from defaulting in a pinch to my first-learned foreign tongue, I had made it a point not to pick up a French book or magazine for months ahead of our visit. As luck would have it, two sisters from Paris were given a table near ours in the dining salon at the Istituto Tommaso. They spoke good English, but for courtesy's sake we shifted back and forth between English and French. I was deeply humiliated. The simplest French words would not come to mind—only their Italian counterparts! I floundered about for several mornings at breakfast before I finally found something like firm ground beneath my feet, but even so I was hardly satisfied with my performance. It was the Frenchwomen's first trip to Rome. They had no Italian. The waiter was a nice young man from Sri Lanka, whose Italian was simple but clear. Next time we visit Paris, my wife and I plan to look up these women. I have already forgotten their names. But Maureen wrote them into her address book.

On our last day in Rome Massimiliano took us to lunch—*primo* and *secondo* with wine—at the zoo's little restaurant. While we were eating, the curator stopped by our table for a chat. Yitzhak Yadid was previously director of the Jerusalem Zoo and speaks flawless English. It was a lovely fall day, and the Villa Borghese was leafless, expansive, and mellow as an English park. None of us could have guessed that, a month later, the Tiber would be threatening to flood the city and the keepers at the Bioparco would be feeding the monkeys chocolate bars and cookies to maintain their energy levels in the unprecedented cold.

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The Alphaville Dictionary

by Thomas Fleming

No Problem

In Jean-Luc Goddard's film *Alphaville*, a secret agent (Lemmy Caution) is sent to find a colleague and to destroy Alphaville itself, a computer-designed dystopia that has reduced humanity to the level of machines. In each hotel room in Alphaville, there is a "Bible," which is really an antidictionary that eliminates words like *love* and *poetry*. In America, we have been doing something very similar by redefining old words and inventing new ones. The effect (purpose?) is to destroy the clarity and precision of English and render us servile, first in speech and then in our minds. Politicians are the real masters in using words to deflect responsibility. Remember Hillary's use of the Clintonian passive, "Mistakes were made," to glide over malfeasance of office? Our current President is no slouch. His equivocation on the $300,000 *douceur* he received on buying a house was the forthright confession of making a "boneheaded . . . mistake."

As a preliminary step toward liberating our minds, I propose this column, eliminating both the bad new words and the duplicitous usages that have been introduced. Please send in your own proposed eliminations either in a regular letter or by e-mail to *alphaville@chroniclesmagazine.org*.

To introduce this feature, I shall begin by clarifying the meanings of several words that have been redesigned to infuse moral ambiguity and reduce our sense of responsibility. Take the word *problem*, as in "I'm having a problem with my physics class" or "I'm having problems in my marriage." Translated into English, these statements might mean, "I am too stupid to learn physics, or maybe I am just lazy," and "I am cheating on my wife or acting like a jerk." A *problem* (from Greek *problema*, derived from the verb *proballein*, "to cast or put before") is a question, typically a difficult question, put before one. One can speak of problems in mathematics or logic, but in everyday life a moral problem should not be a vicious habit (drug use or adultery) or a difficulty (such as poverty). A moral problem is a question, such as "Should a mother of small children get a job to raise money for a private school, or is it more useful for her to spend her time with them?"

Problem has been so abused over the years that ordinary people have begun to suspect that someone who has a "problem with alcohol" or with his wife is simply a drunk or a cheater. Hence we now hear of people having "issues." However, an *issue* (from Latin *exitus*, "a going out") refers to the action of going out of something or the product of that action, as in "an issue of blood." Metaphorically, it is applied to the offspring of a marriage or the consequences of an action or some print publication that is issued or sent out. Jurists also speak of the issue as the point that emerges "at the conclusion of the pleading in action, when one side affirms and the other denies" (OED), and this gave rise to the phrase *at issue*, when the respective parties affirm and deny a point. *Issue* should not be used simply to mean a topic being debated ("the abortion issue"), an abuse that has encouraged us to use it as a synonym for the overused and misused *problem*.

People today also have *concerns*, which may range from "issues" with another person or institution to doubts about character or reliability. "I have some concerns about Miss Smith's performance." Translation: "Miss Smith is a liar and may well be a thief." In any event, she does not do her job adequately. As a verb *to concern* (from Latin *concernere*, "to separate or have regard for") means to have a relation to something or be of importance or engage the attention. The noun properly refers to those things that concern one—that is, which relate to or affect someone. By extension—one I would not have approved of, had I been asked—it came to mean "a business" or "affairs" in general. It should not be used as a weak substitute for *suspicion* or *doubt*, unless you are a bureaucrat writing a memorandum, in which case you are already a menace to society, however well you might speak. ◁

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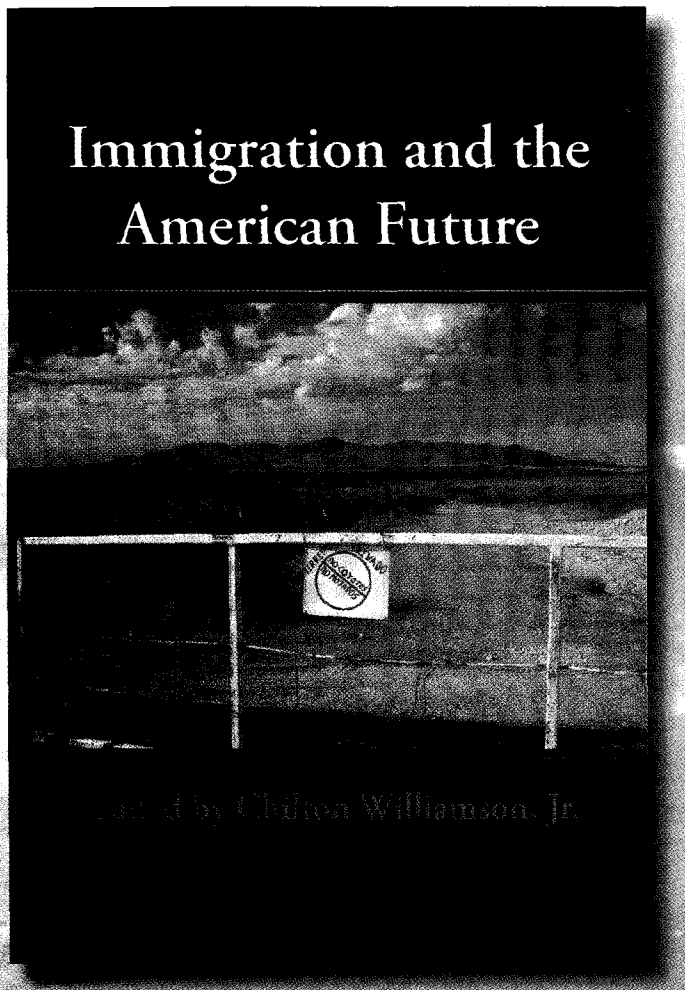

IMMIGRATION AND THE American FUTURE

EDITED BY CHILTON WILLIAMSON, JR.

14 HARD-HITTING CHAPTERS

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—From the Foreword by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

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